



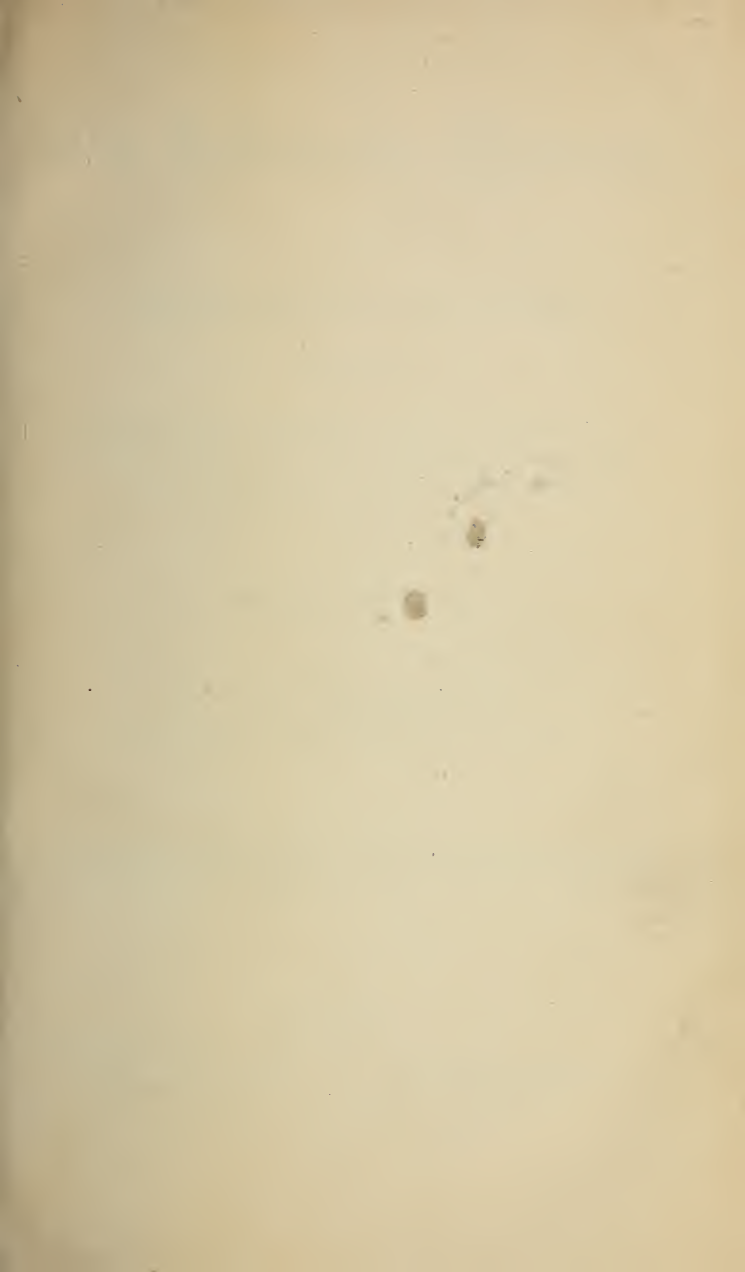
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THE
Irish Reformation Movement,

IN ITS

RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL ASPECTS:

EMBODYING

A COMPENDIOUS AND CONSECUTIVE HISTORY OF IRELAND'S EARLY
CHURCH, ITS FALL, AND EVERY MISSIONARY ORGANISATION
WHICH HAS LABOURED UP TO THE PRESENT TIME
TO RESTORE ITS PRISTINE PURITY.

With Practical Inferences.

BY J. G. MAC WALTER,

OF THE "WARTER" AND "DUBLIN EVENING HERALD" NEWSPAPERS.

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—ISAIAH, xxxv. 10.

DUBLIN:
GEORGE HERBERT, 117, GRAFTON-STREET.

LONDON: SEELEYS, AND HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.

EDINBURGH: W. OLIPHANT AND SON.

1852.

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TO THE
VERY REV. RICHARD MURRAY, D.D.,

DEAN AND VICAR-GENERAL OF ARDAGH,

This Volume,

Sketching the History of our National Church, and detailing the
Events and Circumstances of the

Irish Reformation Movement,

(With which, for the last Half Century, he has been prominently and
honourably connected),

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.

A WORD TO THE SUBSCRIBERS.

It was my intention to publish a full list of the names of those who substantially countenanced the proposal to write the following "History of the Irish Church and Reformation Movement." The size to which the work has unexpectedly extended would now, however, render the accomplishment of that design particularly inconvenient. It will not on that account, I apprehend, be considered that my gratitude to them is in any degree defective. In having performed, to the best of my ability, and with unceasing care, the promises expressed in the prospectus of the work, I hope I shall have done all that the subscribers could expect. I am, nevertheless, deeply sensible of their disinterested kindness in coming forward, in hundreds more than I had calculated on, to encourage an unknown and untried author.

While thus generally returning thanks to each and all, I feel bound to an especial acknowledgment of the great generosity of some individuals, whom, however, I shall not name, lest in doing so I may be accused of detracting from that respect which I profess to all. The list includes many distinguished names from amongst the Peers and Church dignitaries of the United Kingdom. It also contains those of a host of illustrious Clergymen and Members of the House of Commons, as well as a vast number of individuals of rank and influence.

My most anxious, and perhaps presumptuous, desire now is, that all those who have generously interested themselves on behalf of the book which they are here presented with, may not find just reason to regret the exertions they at first made.

J. G. MAC W.

PREFACE.

“ Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.”—1 THESS. v. 21.

IRELAND, from being a Pagan, became a Christian nation. From pure Christianity, “the Island of Saints” lapsed into Roman Catholicism. And from a long subjection to Romanism, it is but now really emerging.

When Pagan power perished throughout the land, the terrific gloom its presence had maintained steadily vanished. Influenced by the salutary teachings of “ Gospel truth,” Ireland soon started into a worthy and proud pre-eminence amongst nations. But, when a corrupt and denationalising religion again crept upon her bosom, Ireland toppled rapidly down, and was crushed beneath wretchedness more withering, and torments more treacherous, than she had ever experienced before her elevation to unsullied Christianity.

These, though concisely stated, are yet startling truths which history reveals, and they constitute the “ matter ” of the present volume. My mind viewed them at first with honest horror. But there they were intelligibly written upon the accredited pages and faithful records of the past. However unpalatable, they were facts—and, however reluctantly, I was forced to accept them in their integrity.

It may be necessary to explain why *I* felt this horror—why to *me* these facts were so disagreeable. It would be sufficient to reply that I was born, reared, and lived at the time a professor of that religion which history painted in such distressing colours before me. But I shall also add, as not apart from the subject, what accident, or rather Providence, brought me thus in contact with historical subjects of so great moment :

A few years ago, while on a visit in this city with an Aunt, I conceived the perhaps childish notion of writing a "historical fiction," tending to illustrate accurately the feelings, manners, and customs which prevailed in Ireland about the time of the "Invasion." History became, of course, a most necessary study. In order to procure the best advantage in that line, a friend—then so, at least—obtained for me daily admission to the *Royal Irish Academy*, where I could use any book in the library. Other extensive repositories of the most valuable historical books were also within my reach. Thus enabled, I went on with the "historical fiction," the nearly complete MS. of which is yet in my possession. The description I attempted bore the stamp of a mind stored with long-rooted enmity against Saxons, to whose invasion of Ireland I piously ascribed all her miseries. I had ever been accustomed to picture Roman Catholic priests as paragons of pure piety—as anti-persecutionists—as men in whom patriotism was paramount—as men never identified with suffering unless as sufferers—with rebellion, unless as the promoters of justice and peace. The Church of which they were ministers appeared to me as the spotless mother of stainless sons. But the unprejudiced perusal of impartial history began to evolve an idea opposed to all this—such an idea as I never before for a moment entertained. I soon found that, in every sense of the word, the contemplated narrative would have been a mass of real fiction if penned without having consulted fair historians, and while my feelings were charged with the deceptive sentiments of an erroneous teaching.

A person who always regarded the English invasion to be as hateful to Rome as it was to Ireland, could not see unmoved that it was the actual result of Rome's own selfish plots. He who religiously believed that the Pope held an uninterrupted sway in this country, from St. Patrick's days down, could not find with pleasure that papal influence and doctrines were perfect strangers in the country up to that period from which her miseries are generally dated—the twelfth century. He who always connected Rome and her priests with piety, philanthropy, and nationality, could not easily look on one as the nurse and the others as meek practisers of deep deceit, utter selfishness, and anti-nation-

ality. After some time, I concluded that either history is false, or Rome has created and nurtured all our national miseries.

From this train of thought I was led to another of a more solemn nature, which being purely polemical, I do not purpose introducing here. I shall, however, remark, that history did much to direct and foster the fresh feelings which crowded upon me. But He who cast me thus simply upon the track of truth, provided the amplest means to sustain and satisfy inquiries, so providentially aroused within one who before shuddered to question Rome's truth or purity. The letters of "A True Catholic," for instance, on more than one occasion met my view, and under singular circumstances. Controversial pamphlets, conversations, and sermons, were not, happily, during my time, of that scarcity which those who lived before me must have regretted. After long, and deep, and prayerful reflection, I availed myself of all these. And I found that, as in the position Rome and history stood to each other regarding practice, so also, if the Bible be true, Rome in doctrine is false.

In this way was accomplished that work which has driven me to sunder *all* earthly ties, in order to bind a heavenly *one* with Christ.

The historical facts which were disclosed, and the impressions they made upon me by the course of inquiry thus brought about, are as succinctly as possible laid before the reader in this volume.

In detailing, as a Protestant, the several events connected with this most serious department of history, I have not forgotten what is due to the feelings of those who yet are what I was; nor have I failed to confine myself to the narration of matters for which most unquestionable authority exists. In all cases, I have suffered the effect of our woes and national degradation to point of itself to its direct *cause*, without any laboured effort on my part. Roman Catholic writers have been regularly appealed to on the subjects detailed, and their opinions are faithfully recorded.

History is most explicit in depicting the many phases through which poor Ireland has passed. I regret to know that too many even now are unacquainted with the particulars of these transitions. Few Roman Catholics will be disposed, at first, to believe that the great originator of our worst calamities was Rome—

that the fomentor of our most disastrous disturbances was and is Rome—that the blight to our national and political health was and is Rome—that the encourager of treason against our dearest interests was and is Rome. Yet this fact is too palpably plain. But, more miserable still, the pernicious policy which dictated all Rome's deceiving acts, was sheer selfishness. And this has been undetected, for a very logical reason:—No Roman Catholic “is *suffered* to seek historical truth,” only in the same cautious manner that he is bound to receive religion—through the medium of those partisan authors, sanctioned by “the Church.” Some, who would clandestinely search for it, will not encounter the expense. Many kindred causes preclude a large portion of Roman Catholics knowing anything of true history. Accident, indeed, places it before many; but authority will never place it before any. That a fair, but necessarily condensed account of historical facts, touching the loftiest concerns of life, may not be in every respect an unreachable book, I have compiled this. If it do not come up to expectation, the sincerity of my purpose has nought to account for. I shall only plead guilty to the non-possession of proper ability for the performance of so serious an undertaking.

The chief title of this volume may, at first, appear not exactly appropriate. I believe, however, that it indicates the contents fully. Unless the centuries between the twelfth and sixteenth, which is the period of *deformation*, all the other time I have written of is, to some extent, connected with Reformation.

Here I may observe, that a very large portion of this volume is devoted to the *Reformation Movement*, strictly so called. The restoration of peace, happiness, and prosperity to this country need never be hoped for, I firmly believe, but with the complete success of Reformation. History well shows what grounds I have for this conclusion. And that fact will also satisfy any person why I have taken such pains to detail a movement I look upon with so peculiar an interest.

Lest it may be necessary, I shall here remark, that in relating the history of any society, I have *wilfully* omitted nothing material, and of none have I *knowingly* said too much. Those missionary operations which occupy much of my space, to my mind, merit more, if it could be apportioned to them. I have,

however, I hope, done no Reformation society an injustice, but treated all fairly.

One feature in Ireland's history, not the least remarkable, though not the least intelligible, will be found to be the tenacity with which the Irish people clung to the skirts of those who first pressed the English yoke upon this country. When it suited the Pope's purpose, rebellion against England was a mighty offence, and the people then did not so much regard his humour; but when selfishness altered that purpose, peace with England was an offence more mighty still, and the people, naturally disliking the successful invader, soon made common cause with the principal and heartless agent in that invasion. They joined Rome, because Rome had then turned upon her former favourite. They altogether, and perhaps willingly, forgot who had been their real enemy, in the fury of a united assault. The delusion grew upon the Irish, strengthening with their weakness, and soon taught them to venerate those whom a little consideration and a better understanding would have caused them to despise.

Roman Catholics even yet are preyed upon by this delusion, and nurture Ireland's most inveterate foe, by countenancing Rome. They, in sooth, make a pitiable use of national feeling—so much boasted of—by clinging to a system which dethroned the national greatness of Ireland. Roman Catholics may, in feeling, but cannot, in practice, be national. Protestants, holding the doctrines taught in Ireland before Rome robbed her of her religion and independence, alone seek her interest in peaceful connexion with that country which, too, bore the rule of Rome, until it became unendurable. They in practice show that theirs is a genuine nationality.

This brief history will also, I hope, explain why so little advance in Reformation has been made in Ireland by the professedly Reformed Church up to this time. England was to blame; she inflicted upon us, in all its tendencies and qualities, Roman Catholicism. That has proved itself an evil of dreadful magnitude. She has also, it is true, introduced amongst us a counterpoise to this, on account of which we are disposed to look with less anger upon her first transgression against our temporal and eternal interests—she has placed within our reach Reformation. Having embraced it fully herself, she had no objection to Ireland going

and doing likewise ; *but*, by an extraordinary indifference, she took no care to herself that we *should* go and do likewise. Through her we obtained the poison ; but when the antidote was administered, so many irregularities accompanied the process, that its effect was almost void.

England owes much, very much to Ireland, by imposing upon our fathers the fetters of Roman Catholicism, in order to secure for herself political dominion in Hibernia. *Olden* England thus stole our best birthright, and has since left us, as a people, RELIGIOUSLY, SOCIALLY, and POLITICALLY degraded. By coming in to the rescue now, *modern* England will merely be doing its duty towards the Irish nation as becometh Christians, and as becometh a people who, through their fathers, are deeply indebted to us.

The narrative herewith published will sufficiently convey the opinions I entertain regarding the great Evangelisation movement just going on, and in which England is doing her duty. I may here add, as my well-weighed, and, perhaps, not worthless conviction, that if no cessation or diminution in the missionary operations takes place, all the next, and much of the present generation of Irishmen will grow up the inheritors of a peaceful land, unclashed Bibles, and unfettered consciences. Our union with England will then, at length, be one of real and religious sisterhood. Our position will become great and respected—morally, socially, and politically.

The blessings of a merciful Father will be then fully manifested upon a repentant nation. Be it so, O Maker and Ruler of “earth and all that in it is.”

J. G. MAC WALTER.

“WARDER” Office, 6, Bachelor’s-walk,
Dublin, September, 1852.

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CHAP. I.—CENTURIES IV.—IX.

IRELAND CHRISTIANIZED—EFFECTS OF EVANGELISM— TRUE RELIGION'S RULE.

Fear not, O land ; be glad and rejoice : for the Lord will do great things.—*Joel*, ii. 21. By mercy and truth iniquity is purged ; and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.—*Proverbs*, xvi. 6.

THE Religion of Ireland, like that of the neighbouring countries, before the introduction of Christianity, was chiefly *Druidic*. This imaginative and superstitious system vigorously flourished amongst a race not physically ill-constituted for its reception, and otherwise unprepared for its rejection. Amongst many fanciful notions, it inculcated the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. Its priests, like those of a modern system (encumbered with as many doctrinal “mummeries”), assumed to themselves all power. They exercised, unquestioned, a spiritual despotism which deprived their votaries of any actual spirit of independence. They claimed to be the sole “owners of tradition” and learning. They pretended to possess prophetic powers ; and, from the absoluteness of their dominion, amassed immense wealth. For this purpose they held extensive traffic in “holy matters.” At times, and very often influenced by revengeful motives, they demanded human victims, instead of beasts, for sacrifice. They venerated wells and trees, and almost deified the mistletoe when it became a parasite to the oak. They very much delighted in leading “hermitical” lives, and in their “voluntary retreats,” away from intercourse with other

men, it not unfrequently occurred that the objects of their devotion became rocks, streams, and groves, for which, in the heat of fanaticism, they generally procured "consecration." And, by the way, the manner in which historians describe the performance of this, and other of their ceremonies, leaves it beyond doubt that they were as gorgeous, as full of "pomp and show," as any modern "exquisite" in such matters could desire. For about a century the Irish remained in undisturbed subjection to Druidism; as fondly attached to its superstitious principles as the most "thorough-going" Roman Catholic can be to his.

There is no distinct proof extant of the particular period when Christianity was first introduced into Ireland. The same defect impedes our discovery of the favoured instrument. Our country is not, however, singular in this respect—a similar mist enshrouds the advent of Christianity to Britain, Gaul, Spain; and even parts of Italy, according to Bede (*Hist.* vol. i. p. 1), are not better enlightened on this head, notwithstanding their propinquity to the supposed *seat* of Christian knowledge. It is, however, beyond doubt, that the Gospel message was known in this country both before the arrival of the emissary of Celestine, who was then Bishop of Rome, and before that of the heaven-sent Patrick. Roman Catholic writers are not behind their craft of the Irish or reformed English Churches in admitting this. Lanigan, for instance, in the opening part of the first volume of his *Ecclesiastical History* (p. 10), seconds Ware in such an assumption. It appears most advisable, however, to quote merely a passage from the chronicle of a celebrated Romish writer named Prosper. He states, in the 301st page of the first volume of his work (*apud* H. Canis), recording the events of Celestine's life, that—"In A.D. 430, Palladius is ordained by Pope Celestine, and sent as first bishop to the *Scots, believing in Christ*"—therefore, to the Irish Church, be it ever so small. It is, perhaps, necessary to observe, that for a considerable period, all writers represented the people of this country as retaining the original name of "Scots."

Harris's *Ware* (vol. ii. p. 7) fully establishes this ; nor will less conclusive information be had from Chalmers's *Caledonia*, vol. i. But that this passage of the historian directly refers to Ireland is not now disputed. It is, then, manifest that there were in Ireland *Christians* ; and it is as undeniable that those Christians had no dealings with Rome, as that they lived without the cognizance of Rome's Bishop. There is, moreover, abundant testimony to show that Ireland received the Christian light from the East, whose Churches denied Rome's supremacy. Romish historians, as will be soon discovered, always censured our Church for her non-acceptance of Romish customs, and studious veneration of those having Eastern origin. I may say, for the ancient Irish Church, what St. Coleman said, at the Council of Whitby, in defence of his holding the Eastern manner of celebrating Easter:—"It was the same which the beloved and blessed Evangelist, St. John, with all the Churches he did oversee, is read to have held." I have not seen an assertion urged with much feasibility to prove that Rome exercised any spiritual sway over, or had any intimate knowledge of our ancient Christian Church. She had, in fact, nothing whatever to do with it. But she calculated how much fruit it promised if it could be secured to her covetous grasp. It occurred to her then, very naturally, as meet labour to "gather it up" for her own greedy motives. Thus actuated, she ordained, as we have seen, Palladius, the "pastor" whom she attempted to intrude upon an unwilling flock. He came to the Irish, not the *first* teacher of Christianity, though he might be of Romanism. But he could have traversed the land's limits without realising his master's hopes. Ireland then too highly prized her independence. His undertaking was, consequently, baffled, and though he came to Ireland without the consent of Ireland, he left her shores with her best wishes for his eternal absence. She had no need of him. Her Church, though yet confined in its operations, was derived from an independent and pure source. Palladius became deeply mortified at his failure, and died, on his way through Scotland to Rome, after having been less

than a year in Ireland. He is said to have never gone farther inland than Wicklow, where he made Christ known to some Pagan inhabitants.

There exists, as I have intimated, the most incontrovertible testimony to Ireland's possessing, before St. Patrick's arrival, a Church, narrow in its limits, but independent. Those who opened to other countries an intimacy with pure Christianity were, even then, many of them, Irishmen. Our own sainted Cathaligus, who lived before the end of the second century, went forth, well trained, with the Word of Life, and told of Jesus in many lands; and finally rested in Italy, where he superintended an episcopal district called Tarentum. His name is not blotted from her annals, even though he taught what she has since abandoned. Nor is our country without much internal evidence of her early possessing men of Christian eminence and sanctity. The names and acts of Kieran, Declan, Ailbe, and other distinguished preachers, yet remain upon her records. And amongst the early Fathers, as I find from works edited by Benedict (tom. iii.), many of them markedly point to the existence in this island of men *versed in Holy Scriptures*. Some of the Continental Universities were even then adorned by men born and trained in the Gospel glory of Ireland. A somewhat significant indication of her early acquired Christianity, and of Rome's tendencies, even as early, to heresy, is given us in a fact, perhaps not generally known. It is this—a Britannie Scot, in the beginning of the fifth century, zealously disseminated at Rome, and, from his strenuous advocacy, gave his name to the Pelagian heresy. Not only do Ussher and Stillingfleet advance this, but, as well as Lanigan (*Ecc. His.* vol. i. p. 16), prove it. This circumstance is chiefly valuable because it, and many accompanying facts, distinctly point to the existence of a Christian Church in Ireland before the end of the fourth century. It is worthy of remark that Du Pin, and others who relate the history of that heresy, expressly represent Pelagius and his Irish *aides*, as having come to Rome *strong in pure faith*, but, while at Rome, from an

intercourse with a clever scholar of "loose notions," they grew corrupt. Every one acquainted with ecclesiastical history knows that he who originated and fomented the heresy which Pelagius upheld, was a Roman, named Ruffinus, who had become deeply tinctured with Origen's notions about original sin. Pelagius, in the ill-directed efforts shaped by this man's opinions, was earnestly supported by his countrymen, Agricola and Celestius. The latter was an Irish noble, and distinguished for pure piety before he fell into the Pelagian heresy. In a work, written about the year 495, by one Gennadius, my statement on this head is found proven. But to enhance its value, I may mention that Dr. Petrie puts forth similar opinions respecting Celestius, *i. e.*, Kelly, in an essay on "The History and Antiquities of Tara Hall." It contains an interesting and forcible passage, referring to a fact already settled—namely, that Celestius wrote most *pious* and *instructive* letters to his parents in Ireland:—

"If," very justly concludes Dr. Petrie, "Celestius, while a youth, wrote letters from a foreign monastery to his parents at home, the conclusion is almost unavoidable, that his parents were able to read them. And, as it appears from Marius Mercator, that Celestius had been a disciple and hearer of Pelagius some twenty years before the disclosure of the Pelagian heresy in 405, the natural conclusion is, that letters were certainly known in Ireland, at least to some persons, in the beginning of the fourth century, and might, possibly, have been known a century earlier."

He was a profound scholar, a courteous and eloquent man. His deep and universal learning gained for him a very dangerous influence over his associates. So much so, that ere very long, in the words of Jerome, he found himself "the leader of the whole band." This writer further adds (*Prolog.* lib. i.—iii), that Pelagius fattened on "Irish flummery," which he derisively styles the heresy advocated. To whatever extent the existence of these misguided men would afford a proof of Ireland's early possession of a Christian Church, we are not confined to it, being able to call up more creditable evidence. If Ireland yielded those who became so lost to her Church's teaching as to stand out for a "lie," she was

not without sending forth him who, by energy, ability, and godly purity, was meetly qualified for the important task of counteracting its poisonous influences. The historian Trithemius gives us a most flattering portrait of one "Sedulius Scotigena" (Sheil, the Irish-born), who opposed the propounders of this heresy. He was loved and distinguished; and consorted with all the eminent men of his day. His boldly assailing Pelagius was accompanied with considerable success, chiefly because amongst many qualifications for his attestation of truth, this was the highest—"He was a man," writes the historian, "eminently versed in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures." This, his peculiar fitness, seems a powerful declaration on behalf of our early Christianity, and its purity. But more, he has left distinctive and decisive proofs of his Church and its doctrines, in a most valuable commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul—the genuineness of which Lanigan and others admit. This, like several works of a Scriptural nature emanating from him, is said to abound in that life, that feeling, that undoubted aversion to formal religion, and that grand reliance on the essential doctrines of the Gospel, which characterise the productions of our Irish divines at present. In him, then, we have a specimen of our ancient Irish Church, which provides for all objections to its antiquity or purity. Now, it is so much to my purpose, that I cannot here refrain from introducing a passage in the writings of Columbanus, which, though written some time afterwards, is so pointed upon the Scripturality and *Protestantism* of our ancient Church, that it will not be considered out of place. The saint, in a "Charge" about canons, to the local bishops, speaking of their *sole* Rule of Faith, which he terms—"those true and singular canons of our Lord Jesus," exclaims:—

"For our canons are the commands of our Lord and His Apostles; these are our faith: lo! here *are our arms*, shield and sword; these are our *defence (apologia)*; these have brought us hither from our fatherland; these we strive to keep even here; in these we pray and desire to persevere unto death, as we have seen our elders also do."

But though Ireland was then ripe enough to spurn any proposed connexion with Rome, as proved by rejecting the Pope's delegate, her Church was yet an infant. Although diminutive, it had the requisite elements of ecclesiastical existence properly organised; there was wanted but a general, open, and spontaneous operation of its principles. Until this fundamental theological activity should co-exist with the power, our Church's progress could not possibly be great, while it may be actually in a state of transition. Therefore, then, without the determined exertion of a regularly active course, our early Church was confined in its limits. Hence it is safest to date its full establishment only when its "labour of love" was extended, and its influence felt throughout the land. That process, though merely the development of laws which were inherent in its original constitution, did not properly take place until about the year 432, when St. Patrick undertook, guided by a divine impulse, his mission to Ireland.

About the beginning of the fourth century, history informs us that Niall, of the nine hostages, who was then "on the throne of Erin," invaded Britain, and ravaged the maritime districts of north-west Gaul. Amongst his captives, he brought to Ireland a youth about sixteen years old, who became acquainted with the country, its language, and its wants; and afterwards turned this knowledge to the best account, as Ireland's illustrious Apostle. Niall's captive youth was called *Succath*, a name long since moulded into Patrick. His birth-place is not positively fixed; some thinking he was born in North Britain, others that France can best boast the honour. All are, however, agreed with his biographer Joceline relative to his parentage; and, as it cannot in fairness be denied that his father, Calpurnius, was a *deacon*, and his grandfather, Potitus, a *priest*, the inference is very little in favour of his or their connexion with Rome, or knowledge of sacerdotal celibacy. Many works purporting to detail Patrick's life are mere caricatures of it and of him; but there is one book which satisfactorily indicates his principles, and

gives many interesting facts connected with his career, that stands above suspicion. It is entitled, *Patrick's Confession*. In it I find the following account of his captivity, and its consequences, too striking not to be copied here :—

“When made captive, I was scarcely sixteen years of age; but *I was ignorant of God*, and therefore it was that I was led captive into Ireland with so many thousands. It was according to our deserts, because we drew back from God. Therefore, the Lord brought upon us the anger of his indignation, and dispersed us abroad among many nations, even to the ends of the earth. But there the Lord imparted to me the feeling (*aperuit sensum*) of my unbelief and hardness of heart, so that I should call my sins to remembrance, though late, and turn with all my heart to God; who, having compassion on my youth and ignorance, watched over me and kept me ere yet I knew him, or had any relish for him (*saperem*); yea, and before I could distinguish between good and evil, awakened me and comforted me, as a father does a child.”

For several years he endured all the harassing trials of a slave, tending sheep beneath a mountain in Antrim, called *Sleivmis*. In this bondage he was not, however without gathering much good fruit. Fast as his manliness improved, his knowledge of God much more greatly increased. This he assures us in the fifth chapter of his *Confession* :—

“At first a clown, an exile, illiterate, unable so much as to see a stem before me;—oh, how true it is that before the Lord humbled me, *I was even as a stone lying in the depth of the mire, and HE WHO ALONE IS ABLE came, and in his mercy lifted me up, and not only lifted me up, but set me on the top of the wall.*”

Even at so early a period of his history as this passage shows, he manifested an acquaintance with the Sacred Volume. After five years of slavish service, and that he had thriven in the principles of Gospel truth and holiness, he escaped from captivity. What followed this event he thus describes in the third chapter of his *Confession* :—

“And after a few years I was again with my parents in Britain, who received me affectionately, and in the faith entreated me to stay with them, and leave them no more, after all

the tribulations I had suffered. But, lo ! that very night I saw, in a vision, a man coming as if from Ireland, by name *Victoricus*, with innumerable letters, and he gave me one of them to read, at the head of which was written, ‘the voice of the *Irish* ;’ and as I read, I thought at the same moment I heard the voice of those who dwell at the wood of Focluth, near the western ocean, crying as though with one mouth, and saying, ‘We beseech thee, holy youth, come and walk still among us.’ And I felt my heart greatly stirred within me, and could read no more, and I awoke. God be praised, who, many years after, rendered to them according to their cry.”

The sacred cause of Christ beckoned him on with irresistible promptings. He beheld what a field was ripe for the sickle, and, cost him what toil or time it may, he set about girding himself with the implements necessary for such an holy reaping. Many were the inducements, many the representations of danger, many the impediments which interposed between him and his design ; but they all vanished before his indomitable perseverance. His purpose was definite, and no remonstrance or earthly hindrance availed to persuade him to abandon the mission he was thus so mysteriously admonished to take. To Ireland, therefore, he came in the year 432. Soon after the papal prelate had abandoned his discouraging efforts, Patrick landed in Wicklow. From this point, however, the Druids obliged him to retreat, for a time at least. Undismayed, he started again towards the country in which he spent his captivity, and fearlessly entered the bay of Dundrum, now not as a slave, but a preacher of freedom. In the adjoining district, the ardent missionary delivered the *Word* with wonderful success. The prince of the barony of *Dichu* became one of his first converts. This prince, upon his conversion, aided by every means in his power, the advancement of God’s cause, and gave the use of a barn as a church for those who followed his noble example. Patrick’s companions to this country—a score of zealous, pious, ecclesiastic, and lay assistants—sedulously laboured with him to diffuse and nourish the “seed of the everlasting Gospel,” already merely sown in parts of the land, but in some, fully alive.

The assertion, sometimes so boldly made, that Patrick was consecrated and commissioned by the Pope, wants for its support even the semblance of reality. No authentic history attempts to elevate it to the dignity of truth, while all respectable Roman Catholic historians disbelieve it. Lanigan, in the fourth chapter of his *Ecc. His.* (vol. i.), grants that it is "most difficult" to prove by whom Patrick was consecrated. Prosper, who records the mission of Palladius, and was Pope Celestine's friend, never once (which is rather singular) alludes to it. That of itself seems the strongest negative evidence. But Platina, who penned the lives of *all* the Roman bishops to Sextus IV., treats it with similar silence. Such omissions are most unaccountable, if Patrick were really dispatched by any of Rome's bishops. Bede also negligently slips over poor Patrick's appointment. Not so the entire class of Irish writers. They who argue on the side of truth claim him as the selected of God, and bearing His Word, the successful apostle of the land. But though it is clear that he was never in Rome, and did not receive his consecration from Rome, it is not equally certain which French bishop (for it must be one) did consecrate him. The claim of his being dispatched by Rome is, moreover, as Dr. Phelan properly states, founded on documents comparatively recent. Perhaps the best refutation of such a claim is given by Patrick himself. His whole history, his teachings, his independence, all proclaim its falsity. Whatever he taught embodied those things which we hold as essentially Protestant. His confession is replete with Scripture texts and principles. Not less so is the grand hymn, the "Armour," now so generally known as the celebrated prayer he used to shield himself from any danger that might have lurked on his journey to Tara, where he purposed preaching Christ crucified to the Druidic kings. It is Christ, and Christ only, from beginning to end. Christ in all and above all is its theme, worth, and substance. This holy man also did not merely allow, but made it an especial point, even according to Joceyline (*Vita*, c. 94), to *inculcate* the necessity of learning the

Holy Scriptures. He knew the volume intimately himself, and impressed all others with its great benefit. He, as a passage already quoted proves, held Gospel views of "self-merit." His clergy followed the "matrimonial example" set by his father and grandfather, not only with his tacit, but avowed sanction. In his lifetime was passed a decree enforcing a penalty on *any* clergyman's wife who would be observed outside doors unveiled. Never does an idea of "purgatory" seem to have crossed his mind. He held that there were, heaven for the just, hell for the wicked, and earth as the passage to either. None of his doctrines differed with the Bible, or agreed with Rome. He exercised, uncontrolled, the several functions of his prelacy, and there is no single instance of his having ever appealed for directions or counsel to any power except to God and Holy Writ. If he knew anything of papal supremacy, he must have grievously disregarded it. He selected, consecrated, and appointed his own bishops. His mission being derived from the supreme authority of all, he felt empowered to transmit its privileges. He alludes to his "nomination" himself in the following terms, in his *Confession* :— "Therefore, though I wished much and most earnestly desired to go to *Britain*, as if to my country and kindred; and not only so, but to proceed even as far as Gaul, the Lord knows how earnestly I wished it; yet, bound in the spirit (which declares me guilty if I should do so), I fear lest I should lose aught of my labour—*nay, not mine, but Christ's my Lord's*, who commanded me to come to this people and *be with them during the residue of my life*."

In a comparatively brief space of time, after spreading the Gospel with much contention, Patrick had aroused into Christian life almost the entire nation. He preached perseveringly the Word, and it only. Inquiry, nearly always accompanied with bitterness, rapidly extended, and was generally followed by conversion. In short, Heaven's truth, as enunciated by a real servant of God, was infused with peculiar force in a noble and religiously inclined race. By one man's ex-

exertions and instrumentality Gospel truth took hold of the kings, commencing with the peasantry, of whom—and it is a singular and encouraging coincidence—we are told by a writer in the ninth century, called Nennius, “better *than* 12,000 in *Connaught alone were converted to the faith.*” Christianity was thus approaching the summit of success in our country, when its rejoicing propagator’s holy career came to a peaceful close, in the March of 465 ; some say later. It is generally agreed that he lived seventy-eight years. He was buried, not as Rome would even then inter him, in an obscure grave in the county of Down, and escorted to his lowly tomb with sorrow, but no pomp. In that respected resting-place his bones and ashes met with no disturbance ; people then being unenlightened (!) on the subject of relic worship. It is said, by some historians, that Patrick founded in Ireland 365 churches, and ordained as many bishops, and 3,000 presbyters. At all events, he died as the Gospel seed was safely sown and guarded in the land.

When Ireland was blessed by the extension of Christianity, which became, after some hard struggles, the adopted religion of the land, and when the absurdities of Druidism were totally abolished, our country’s change became great and signal. She started into a prominent position, and acquired such a name as entitled her to the highest rank and respect amongst nations. Having the power, she rendered, with a parental and generous heart, assistance to all who sought her fosterage. Ere long she became to Europe the dispenser of that beaming knowledge, which, after much anger and disputation, she had herself embraced. Nor is it denied that she shone upon earth a “mighty lustre.” But this light did not always burn with the same brilliancy, even while not in presence of an adverse flame. Some think that a dimness was observable in the Christian light of Ireland not long after Patrick’s demise. Others do not believe it. Patrick himself, at all events, is reported by Joceyline (*Vita*, c. 175) to have witnessed a most singular vision, which, as it were, mapped out the ups and downs of Christianity

in this country. The biographer states that, in the vision, the saint first observed Ireland wrapt in flames to the very heavens ; but presently those great flames ascended, and soon there was a necessity for lamps. But the lamps shortly dwindled into small tapers, and at last the tapers vanished, and only a few unextinguished coals appeared. Here was a glance at Ireland's future state, that we who have been born at this time may say is literally fulfilled. But one thing remains to be added. Patrick grieved at what he saw, and the historian says an angel directed him to look again ; and lo ! the coals had become enkindled in the north, and the blaze, struggling hard, restored Ireland to her first fiery condition.

This is really singular, and paints, accurately enough, the state of Ireland since Patrick's time to the present ; Ireland was in the full blaze of Scripture purity when, as Joceyline explains the vision, the Danes dimmed her brightness, and, as consequent upon this invasion, " it came to pass," writes this same Joceyline, in the chapter already quoted, " that various rites, contrary to the laws of the Church, were introduced into Ireland, *and new sacraments*, opposed to its constitution, were founded by prelates of a Church ignorant of God's law." Here, on approved authority, is an interpretation of the great darkness Patrick saw—Rome's intrusion upon the light. She succeeded (history, following up the vision, insists) in extinguishing " all the lights," and scarcely sparing the embers—the poor remnant of what Ireland's Church was. But it is from these trodden coals that our country is again to be restored to her fiery brightness ; and I feel assured that, as the struggles were to be long and fierce, we are coming to the crisis of the recovery of that lost position. Doubt it who may, in the face of facts given towards the end of this volume.

Historians of every grade concur, that Ireland, under the dominancy of pure Christianity, was opulent and happy ; her physical power courted and respected ; her holier example looked up to with an emulous desire ; her name venerated, and a guarantee of safety in every clime. Kings of neighbouring nations sought within

her pious and happily peaceful arms, a shelter for themselves, and nurture and schooling for their offspring. Such is an idea of the reward our country received on embracing pure, unsullied Christianity—Christianity as crystally bright as the divine fount whence it sprang. No one can discover even the remotest indication that it contained any one of Rome's subsequent multitudinous errors. If it be undeniable that a perfect mastery of the Scriptures condemns, instead of favouring Romanism, this is easily arrived at. It cannot be maintained that Rome's schism had gained upon our Church, when its ancient ministers indubitably grounded their faith upon God's Word (*vide Columbanus's Life*). I have not the slightest doubt on my mind, and history sustains my opinion, that if Paladius succeeded in introducing here his master's forbidden and mischievous sway, Hibernia's prosperity would not only be imperilled, but destroyed with as much withering certainty as Ireland, to her great sorrow, now knows it had been some time afterwards, when it was entrapped by the devices of that same Rome. And, by the way, this is not an inappropriate place to remark how cautious in adopting new and foreign customs our early prelates were. Instead of hurriedly approving of any fondled abuse which, in its raw or undeveloped state, may spring up in the specious guise of sanctity, they brought it "to the law and to the testimony;" and if it did not speak consistently with them, it was utterly discarded. There is a satisfactory protest of this kind on record, as made by an Irish bishop of the seventh century—Columbanus—against Boniface, then Bishop of Rome, little sanctioning "infallibility." Columbanus addresses the Roman prelate respectfully, but in a decided and firm tone of admonition. His language is pointed and scriptural, and speaks chapters against Romanism. He denounces the corruptions which were then making defilement visible in the see of Rome, saying:—

"Despise not the poor advice of a stranger, as being the teacher of one who is zealous for thy sake. The world is now drawing to an end: *THE prince of pastors* is approaching: beware

lest he find thee remiss and negligent, both beating thy fellow-servants with the blows of an evil example, and eating and drinking with Hebrews; lest what follows (in that place of Scripture) befall thee, as the consequence of thy security. '*For he who is ignorant shall be ignorant.*'—1 Cor. xiv. 38. . . . Watch, therefore, I pray thee, O Pope; watch, and again, I say, watch; because, doubtless, *Vigilius* did not well keep *vigil*, whom those who throw blame upon thee, cry out to be *the head of the scandal*.

. . . . We (the Irish) are the disciples of Saints Peter and Paul, and of all those their disciples, who by the Holy Ghost have written the divine Canon:—yes, we, the whole body of the Irish Church, who are inhabitants of the ends of the world, AND RECEIVE NOTHING BEYOND THE TEACHING OF THE EVANGELISTS AND THE APOSTLES. There has never been amongst us any heretic, any Judaizer, any schismatic; but the Catholic faith has been held unshaken by us, as it was first delivered. . . . For, it is doleful, nay, deplorable, *if in an apostolic seat the Catholic faith is not held*. . . . Therefore, I beseech you, for Christ's sake, come to the relief of your own good name, which is torn to pieces among the nations; that your silence be no longer imputed to your treachery by your rivals. Dissemble, therefore, no longer; keep no longer silence, but send forth the voice of a true shepherd. . . . Surely the blame is yours if you have wandered from the true faith, and made void the first faith. Deservedly do your juniors threaten you. Deservedly they refuse communion with you, until the memory of the wicked be wiped out from you, and consigned to oblivion. For, if their charges are more certain than false, then, the tables being turned, your sons are changed into the head, and you into the tail, which is a grief even to say. Therefore, also they shall be your judges, who have always kept the Catholic faith, *no matter who they be*, even though they may appear your juniors. For the orthodox true Catholics are they who have never at any time either received or defended heretics or any other person suspected of heresy, but have always zealously persevered in the true faith."

Similar independence, and intimacy with Scripture stamped the acts of all our ancient prelates. If my allotted space sanctioned such, it would be a pleasing task to write the history of men who were, from this cause, ever armed with a pious honour and rectitude. Amongst those of them who immediately succeeded Patrick, I may class St. Finnian. He, on the direct authority of Lanigan (vol. i. p. 465), spent his whole life *lecturing on the Holy Scriptures*. Beneath the

mastery of such an informed mind, the best of Ireland's sons acquired mental strength. At Finnian's seminary in Clonard, many distinguished saints received the "polishing stroke" to an education which inspired them with that confidence, energy, and indomitable Christian courage that frustrated the schemes of evil, and chartered so safely and proudly the early Church which they adorned. One of Finnian's pupils, the celebrated Columbkille, claims, at my hands, a few words relative to his life and labours. The name by which Columba is familiarly known, affords an apt epitome of his career, *Colum* signifying "dove," because of his faithfulness and mildness, and *kille*, "of the Churches," in memory of his having founded a large number of houses of worship and Christian Scriptural schools. His ancestry was "right royal," being that of the hero of the nine hostages, the famed monarch Niall, as Lanigan attests. Historians date his birth from the year 521; and the "heyday" of his noble and flourishing missionary exertions about thirty years afterwards. He was not slow or uncertain in the promulgation of that Scriptural knowledge and those other noble Christian principles which he had imbibed at Clonard. From his youth he was distinguished for holy zeal and eloquence. During the ministry of St. Patrick, theological studies, in which he excelled, engrossed all his time and attention. Fortified with the thoroughly Scriptural and un-Romish doctrines which characterised the ancient Church and its dignitaries, he became, say the *Annals of Ulster*, "next to Patrick, a principal promoter of the Irish Church." Having found it, when called to the ministry, in an operative condition, his chief aim was to build and procure the endowment of churches and schools. Several ecclesiastical colleges sprung into life, in which he was never weary of teaching "the word." The Culdean order of ecclesiastical teachers, which is said to have been now revived by him, existed up to the time of Bishop Ussher. These, or any of the ecclesiastical institutions sanctioned or established by him, did not, in the least, savour of Romish monkery. Neither can it

be shewn, that their founder or themselves had directly or indirectly any intercourse with Rome or Romanism. But the internal evidence, that the contrary was the fact sweeps away every doubt. Many of their essentials disagreed with, and all their customs were adverse to, Rome. In the manner, for instance, of their observing Easter, they followed, as in most other things, the Christians of lesser Asia, or Quartadicemen, who stood directly opposed to Rome on that point and most others. Those who accepted the terms of these institutions were bound by no stronger tie than that which imbanded the secular clergy. Celibacy was not known amongst them. The object of these institutions was chiefly, as Roman Catholic historians admit, the advancement of Scriptural knowledge. Bede grants that its *alumni* were constrained to commit the sacred volume to memory. "It is true," observes that historian, in the third book of his *Ecclesiastical History*, "they followed uncertain rules in the observance of Easter ; . . . *only practising* such works of charity and piety as they could learn from the *prophetical, evangelic, and apostolical writings.*"

This unintended eulogy is better than the most premeditated praise. They trained for all parts of Europe missionaries, whom they sent out full of piety and Gospel knowledge. Adjacent nations, yea, and even remote kingdoms, were first told of Jesus through the noble and zealous missionaries furnished by our ancient colleges. Multitudes of preachers left the country for that purpose. Many of them were raised to episcopal honours in their adopted countries ; and through Germany, Switzerland, and even Italy, their missionary travels are not yet ungratefully forgotten.

When Columba had established several colleges in Ireland, by some, very improperly, called "monasteries," he selected about a dozen wise, devoted, and pious missionaries, with whom he left Ireland, to spread the Gospel amongst the North Britons, who were as yet mostly Pagan. Bede, no favourer of his creed, notices his success. As he went along, he founded missionary stations in abundance, and proceeded propagating the

Word through other parts of Europe, returning occasionally to Ireland. Before his happy death, he retired to a small island, known as Iona, which he had received as a grant from the Albanian king, and wherein he had erected a college and church. In this favourite retreat, when he was seventy-six years old, his soul was resigned into the hands of its Redeemer.

It may be right to observe here, that monachism, in its first "secluded," although not Romish sense, originated, like many other things, in necessity. Those who fled from persecution, generally sought out inaccessible cells, or hiding-places, for safety. Becoming accustomed to these, they often, through a false piety, remained there when danger no longer existed. Athanasius, in 340, founded the first monasteries, which, like our Irish ones, partook of no Romanism. The ascetics of old did not leave "worldly cares," though they mostly abandoned "worldly pleasures." Their duties were scriptural and their consciences free. They so much respected the marriage state, that they preserved its sacredness by adopting it for themselves. The early Irish saints, writes an ancient author, noticed in Ussher's works (vol. vi.), "did not reject the attendance and *fellowship* of women, because, being founded on the Rock, Christ, they feared not the winds of temptation." Add to this a rather strange sentence in a canon passed by the Northumbrian Culdees, in 950, saying, "If a *priest* dismiss *one* wife, and take another, let him be anathema." On this matter, too, a very conclusive passage occurs in a letter written by Athanasius to some men who imagined themselves apostles. The letter was written in 354 (*vide* Bingham, vii.), and goes on to say of those men, that they arrogantly assume such a name, for they rejected such men as "continued to keep company with their wives, and of which sort the Catholic Church has *very many*, both monks and clergy." Augustine did not differ with the father just quoted, in "trimming" the abuses that were creeping into "monasteries" then. But error gained upon them apace. It was at the Council of Chalcedon, in 451, that

Rome decreed the doom of Christianity in these institutions. But however great or small became the consequent change in the monasteries of the "East or West," Ireland's "ecclesiastical schools," as Lanigan decisively shows (vol. iv.), were not in the least affected. In this same volume also Lanigan proves that our Irish inmates of such schools had no peculiar vesture, only such as each thought most accordant with the gravity of his office. In that, as in everything else, "private judgment" prevailed with them.

My limited space warns me not to recur to such a prolific topic, and one so full of cheering facts, as the early missionary spirit and character of the Irish. I fear I could not even advert, save in the most general terms, to the crowds of distinguished missionaries who, about this time, poured forth into foreign lands, without cessation, from Ireland. She was then, as it were, Europe's college of Christianity, as much as Rome is now the head-quarters of its opposite. But I must say a word about our ancient colleges. Taking their character upon the authority of the Romish historian, Lanigan, they—

"Were *not merely monasteries, in the strict sense of the word*, such as those that anciently existed in Egypt, or the Benedictine and other monasteries that commenced in the West, after the times we are now treating of (fifth century); but rather *colleges*, in which a bishop lived with some of his clergy, or with persons retired from the world, and in which young men were instructed and prepared for the service of the church. As certain *rules* (he adds), similar to those of monastic houses, were observed in such establishments, they also began to *be called monasteries*."

And following the expression used by the same writer, I have called, and shall continue to call them, as long as they remained so, "ecclesiastical schools, or seminaries." O'Halloran, in the second volume of his history, sustains Lanigan in fair dealing with this view of our ancient "monasteries." Bingham, in the second volume of his *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, aids both, and fully bears out the statement, that they were places wherein the *Word of God* was faithfully taught, and learning

abounded. All classes of writers combine, although after divers fashions, in triumphantly refuting the assumption, that they did savour of Rome's monkery. I cannot resist giving a sweeping proof of this fact from the writings of the Roman Catholic zealot, St. Bernard, the great friend and favourer of Malachy, the first Irish prelate who desired connexion with Rome. Malachy, at the time Bernard writes, had made what has been properly designated, a "treacherous visit" to Rome; "and," quotes Lanigan, from Bernard—

"On his return to Ireland, he left four of his companions in Clairvaux monastery, for the purpose of learning its rules and regulations, and of their being in due time *qualified to introduce them into Ireland*. He said, on this occasion, they will serve us *for seed*, and in this seed nations will be blessed, even those nations, which, from old time, have *heard* of the name of monk, *but have never seen a monk*."

Thus it is beyond a doubt, that though our country was studded with collegiate seminaries, she had not yet the misfortune of knowing anything of monastic "mummery." Would that she had never experienced that equivocal blessing! To those unsullied abodes of learning, students flocked in crowds from all parts. If a person were missing "abroad," it was said of him, "Oh, he has gone for learning into Ireland," so proverbial did this fame become. That it was so, the learned Camden is no unworthy authority. Nor were our early teachers niggards in the bestowal of gifts and acquirements they so largely possessed. In support of their generosity, I shall just quote a passage from Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, b. iii. c. 27, where, speaking upon this very subject, and of that very time, he writes:—

"There were in Ireland many, both of the nobility and of the middle classes of the English nation, who, having left their native island, had retired thither for the sake of READING GOD'S WORD, or leading a more holy life. All whom the Irish receiving most warmly, supplied, not only with daily food, *free of charge*, but even with books to read, and masters to teach *gratuitously*."

Those who partook of Ireland's bounty in learning, extended her name, perhaps through gratitude, to the extremities of the civilized portions of the earth; and to be an Irishman was then regarded an honour. Her character for religion had, too, so enhanced her celebrity, that she acquired the well-known pet appellations of "the island of saints," "the asylum of piety," "the retreat of sacred learning," &c. She was not, meantime, exempt from the long, and oft bitter, controversies of the day. That on the question of holding Easter was the most fierce and formidable. Those who opposed the Eastern custom, did so through attachment for the "primitive teaching and traditions" of their forefathers. Those favouring it, obeyed the Apostle's advice—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—(*Vide* Ussher.) But there were found no favourers to the Roman schism in Ireland; indeed, it is certain that our ancient bishops were very vigorous in their antagonism to the tenets of Rome. But, nevertheless, so great and impressive was their piety and learning, that the Church of Rome of that time (for, notwithstanding her "infallibility," she is proved to be pliant) greatly respected our prelates, and did not, by any of her acts or sayings, imply that they were not faithful Christians, or outside the pale of salvation. On the contrary, there is sufficient evidence to show that (in the face of "exclusive salvation") the Irish bishops were deemed not "damnable" by the Roman Church, whose authority they utterly denied. Collier (vol. i.) agrees with Lanigan on this. If a desire to exhibit a hostile detestation for doctrines or customs arose at any side, I am inclined to think it was at the side of the Irish Church. We have an instance in the seventh century of an Irish bishop positively refusing to eat meat under the same roof with the Romish Bishop of Canterbury. This fact is mentioned by Collier (vol. i.), who quotes from an original letter of Lawrence Archbishop of Canterbury, that "Daganus, an Irish bishop, refused to eat with him under the same roof." In about fifty years afterwards, so steadfast had the Irish, having proved all things, held that which was

good, in their minds, that Colman, an Irish Northumbrian bishop, chose rather to resign his see than submit to Romish rule, then accepted in that country. Bede applauds his independence, but censures his hate of Rome (vol. iii.) The Papacy was now, however, only beginning her erroneously wayward course, and the causes of dispute, up to the eighth century, between the two churches were, in reality, trivial. That they existed, however, proves how much Ireland loved the *Bible*, *private judgment*, and *independence*. And there is incontestible proof that when Rome's false notions were tainting the British Church, planted by Irish missionaries, Ireland knew none of them as a part of her pure system. Lanigan, and other Romish writers, do not conceal the fact, that when Rome was imbedding her influences in Britain, her first efforts were directed to the uprooting of the *Irish* Christianity, long growing in the country. Accordingly, she prompted the Danish kings to expel the Culdees, and others, who opposed her march of error. The kings acted upon her wish, and the introduction of Benedictines gave a substance to her possession of the land. Not unlike was her capture of Ireland some time later.

Some doubt that the great influence of Christianity in Ireland, though doing incalculable good in other respects, bettered the condition of the fine arts. But history refuses to admit this doubt as based on good foundation. Science and art were at this time in the most flourishing state, while the steady process of corruption at Rome, whose symptoms were gradually growing more odious, proved detrimental to their existence in that city, so long renowned for its advocacy and support of all that was essentially artistic or classically magnificent. Listen to Mosheim on this topic; speaking of the eighth century, he says—

“If we except some poor remains of learning, which were yet to be found at Rome, and in certain cities of Italy, the sciences seem to have abandoned the Continent, and fixed their residence in *Ireland*. That the Hibernians were lovers of learning, and distinguished themselves in these times of ignorance, by the

culture of the sciences beyond all other European nations, travelling into the most distant lands, both with a view to improve and communicate their knowledge, is a fact with which I have been long acquainted; as we see them in the most authentic records of antiquity, discharging with the highest reputation and applause, the functions of doctors in France, Germany, and Italy, both during this and the following century (*i. e.*, the eighth and ninth centuries). But, that these Hibernians were the first teachers of the *scholastic theology* in Europe, and so early as the eighth century illustrated the doctrines of religion by the *principles of philosophy*, I speak from the testimony of Benedict Abbott, who lived in this period, and some of whose productions are published by Balusines, from whence it appears, that the philosophical or scholastic theology among the Satrus is of more ancient date than is commonly imagined."

More evidence would be superfluous. Refine it how we may, it will be admitted that the great affliction which had seized the *rest* of Christendom, was the suppression of "private judgment." Men forbade themselves to revolt against unreasonable mandates, and, being too obsequious to all Roman Church orders, or passive before every religious intrigue, they were obliged to take the consequences, which were not favourable to art, sciences, or learning of any kind. But Ireland clung resolutely to this privilege, indicative of her nobleness. Irish divines were alone those "who," says Mosheim, "refused to dishonour their reason *by submitting it implicitly to the dictates of authority*. Naturally subtle and sagacious, they applied their philosophy, such as it was, to the illustration of the truth and doctrines of religion: a method which was almost generally abhorred and exploded in all other nations." Yea, and Irish divines were the men possessed of such souls as inspired them with a glorious fortitude, not only to dissent from, in public, Romish decrees, but actually to *excommunicate* the Church—the boastedly infallible Church, which propounded these decrees! Listen; it is very singular, and of the utmost importance. When "the Controversy of the Three Chapters" raged through Christendom, and the Emperor Justinian procured, by his influence over the Pope, at the Constantinopolitan Council, the condemnation of the writings of three emi-

nent fathers—Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas, Cardinal, mark, Cardinal Baronius, in relating the circumstance, says :—

“By the malice of the evil spirit it happened, that the Irish Church, &c., having suffered shipwreck by her not following in the wake of the bark of Peter, opposed the ‘holy Catholic Church.’ For *all* the Bishops, which were in Ireland, rose up unanimously, with most ardent zeal, in defence of the Three Chapters. And when they heard that the Church of Rome had adopted the condemnation of the Three Chapters, and strengthened the fifth synod by her concurrence, *they added also this further impiety, that they separated themselves from the same* (i. e., *they excommunicated* the Church of Rome). And in this state they continued a very long time, pitying those who followed the fifth synod, as *wanderers from the straight path of the faith*. Nay, so much the more fixedly do they adhere to their error, because, whatever calamities Italy was suffering, at that time, from war and famine, or pestilence, all these misfortunes, they (the Irish) thought, befell her, because she had condemned the Three Chapters.”

This remarkable extract is taken, somewhat condensed, from Baronius's *Annals*, tome vii.

If it do not show independence of Rome, what can ? If this, with all its concomitants, be not the spirit which to-day animates our Protestantism, what is ?

It is truly gratifying to an Irish Catholic mind, while reading ecclesiastical history, to look into the position of his country's Church, when, in almost all other parts of Europe, the bright sun of Christianity was growing dim. When Rome day by day exhibited and spread her alarming epidemic, Ireland, though unable to arrest the rank poison which was polluting the religious atmosphere, did not inhale its deleterious principles. She was yet free when Europe was becoming enslaved. She held, to a great extent, her primitive simplicity and health, when other countries had adulterated apostolic plainness, and had grown stagnant. Her missionaries, bearing the “pure milk” of the Word, were now beginning to be denied access to such countries as Rome had subdued. The ordination, for obvious reasons, of our bishops, Rome held then invalid in the same manner

that she now does. But, lest the subject would induce me to depart from my intended economy of space, I will here merely observe, that it requires little, if any, literary or sophistic dexterity in advancing the facts I have given in this chapter, to undermine any notions which may be entertained contrary to the fact, that our ancient Church was thoroughly independent and Scripturally pure. And, it cannot be less clear, that the effects of evangelical teaching being received by the whole nation, was the uplifting of our country to an admired and envied altitude—to knowledge, power, and goodness. From this sketch it is, I trust, also manifest that the religion of the “old times” is quite identical with that now preached; that our independence of Rome is still substantially the same; and that, in all, we possess at present the “olden faith,” transmitted unimpaired, though amidst great contention, from St. Patrick’s days, at least, to our own time.

CHAPTER II.

(FROM THE NINTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURIES.)

CHRISTIAN CATHOLICITY CHECKED—APOSTASY
ABROAD—THE PAPAL WEDGE POINTED.

Thus saith the Lord, an evil . . . is come.—*Ezekiel*, vii. 5. Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Howl ye, woe worth the day.—*Id.* xxx. 2. Woe to the rebellious children that take counsel, but not of me.—*Isa.* xxx. 1. Destruction upon destruction is cried, for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment.—*Jer.* iv. 20.

I HAVE attempted to trace, however cursorily, the establishment in Ireland of pure Scriptural Christianity. Being obliged to guard against expressing the germinant thoughts with which such a theme abounds, I have acquitted myself fairly, if I have told, with sufficient distinctness, how great and happy was Ireland's change from Druidic to Christian, and if I have sketched important events connected with our ecclesiastical progress during a period which may be said to embrace the time from about the fourth century to the beginning of the ninth. If I have done this, leaving the inferences of its perfect harmony with our present religion easily deducible, my object is gained. It would be impracticable within my assigned limits to reach, with a hope of detailing, the various struggles which affected the Church, or the many controversies which our primeval pastors took a part in. Suffice it, that the pure doctrines of the Irish Church are described as having maintained a stately and majestic stand against every super-sensuous, unnatural, or unreasonable absurdity that was broached. Not only in Ireland but "abroad," Irishmen, even on Lanigan's authority, were constantly and faithfully representing the vitality of Gospel teaching,

and clearing away every accumulation of error. Abroad our country's name was great. At home, with the amplification of Gospel knowledge, her social and moral conditions grew lofty; and her nobleness of character, attributable to her unsullied religious tenets alone, was so sustained, as though by a self-subsisting law, until the ninth century, when the presumptuous and ruin-carrying invader of nations' rights, with wonted heartlessness and sagacity, made a second more cautious and fatal aggression upon our loved and sacred Church and cherished land. Having confirmed his own country's intellectual lowness, and traced his foot-prints through Europe with the red blood of martyrs and the clanking of chains, the forerunner of Antichrist (as Gregory Bishop of Rome, ere she fell, designates him who would assume the name and title which Popes since claim) cast his longing look towards that distant isle which spurned his predecessor's advances, and opened its hospitable portals to men, arts, learning, and sciences, who and which had been driven by this same man's system from their own homesteads. His "evil eye" did not turn its avaricious glance towards Ireland in vain. But I must a little more minutely describe this too unhappily effective attack upon our national religion and independence, made with the scientific energy of accomplished treachery.

During the five centuries that elapsed since Palladius's hasty and ignoble departure, the Bishop of Rome, if he had attempted to disturb that repose and quiet which were essentially Ireland's, did so too covertly for exposure. His intentions were conjectured, but his designs respecting Ireland were very little known. The time was, however, fast approaching when the favourers of Romanism hesitated not to obtrude, by every surreptitious manner, their dull formalities upon our originally sublime Christian purity and devotion. And their wily manœuvres having turned out fatally successful, our country's Christianity, morality, art, intellect, independence, and glory, were gradually crumbled together into one discordant wreck, paying the penalty of apos-

tatising. Patrick's vision was about being realised. The "blaze" was declining, and ere long nothing but the *coals* remained !

The great northern pirates, familiarly known as "Danes," after many desperate efforts, effected a landing upon our shores, in 807 (Lanigan, vol. iii.) The year before, in their plundering adventures along the coast, they burned, for the second time, "to the ground," Columbas's favourite college at Iona, sparing not even its helpless inmates. They were not, however, controllers yet of any part of Ireland. But to acquire a mastery, they continued a war, cruelly destructive and atrocious in its bearings and consequences, from the landing of Turgesius, in 818, to their total defeat at Clontarf, in 1014. Bloody and dark do those days figure in the annals of Ireland. Her schools were upset, her buildings destroyed ; her scholars became affrighted, and fled ; her beauty assoiled ; the whole face of the country was, as it were, covered with gore and mourning. Petty feuds had already partially weakened the kingdom, and the hardy and relentless invaders met, therefore, greater, though perhaps not easier success. No edifice had, either in its use or magnificence, any talisman sufficiently influential to stay the destroyer's hand. The more beautiful or sacred it was, the more intense seemed to be his desire to demolish it. Many valuable books and records were amongst the inoffensive objects of wanton excess. Nor were the ferocious strangers all this time without casting off their inherited paganism. I read that, about the year 948, the Danes under Anlaf, who had previously seized and fortified Dublin, were converted to Christianity, at least in name. In irreligious doings, they were yet perverse. They had now great power, but it was acquired without much security. They were not numerically insignificant, and not over formidable. Though many natives, through cupidity or revenge, had joined their ungodly standards, they were loathed by the Irish in general. For many years the vicissitudes of war, originated by them, furnished kings, Danish and Irish, successively

to Dublin and other cities. But when those intrepid marauders were irrecoverably vanquished at Clontarf, they, by arrangements with the conquerors, betook themselves to the cities of Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford. In such involuntary retreats the concordat constrained them to adopt commercial lives and habits; and every circumstance connected with even their common exercise of these avocations betokens obstinate depravity. Commingling with such mischievous associates, just as she was reduced by the horrors of war, Ireland soon experienced a "crawling beneath real misery." Cut down and vitiated by her daring and defeated foes, she was unprepared to prevent the underhand working of Rome through her pretended friends. Soon did the Papacy, therefore, acquire that solidity for the influence with which she subsequently so terribly ruled. The Irish clergy, by the necessity of defending their "lives and hearths," became gradually trained in carnal warfare; and, as Lanigan hints, it is too probable they daily grew unfamiliar with spiritual weapons. But to Ireland a misfortune greater still arose from the barbarities of her merciless plunderers. All who were great and eminent in the country, and could find means to fly abroad, as though anticipating the actual wreck, abandoned her.

Amongst the emigrants of this sort I have to class the celebrated Johannes Scotus Erigena (John Scott the Irishman), of whom I wish to say a little. He became an especial favourite at the court of Charles the Bald of France, to which country he had gone. But that is well known. His learning and piety procured for him the highest honour of the Romish Church—enrolment on the list of saints. This is a most remarkable fact little known, and meriting extensive circulation. Cave proves it (*Litt.* tome 1). Ussher supports it (*Sylloge E. H.* No. 24). Lanigan alone *doubts* it, although he does not successfully show why. John Scott, then, on creditable authority, was a *saint*, and had received saintly honours when he was no saint at all! Wonderful mark of infallible judgment in Rome to deck a man with such

a dignity one day, and deem him merely worthy of hell another! and only to discover all this when his destiny should have been fixed, he being long before numbered with the dead. When Rome made a saint of John, she had not decreed that transubstantiation was a veritable and necessary doctrine. But after she had done so (unchangeable creature), she had, of course miraculously, disclosed to her what the world already knew, that John was its most inveterate foe! Therefore she applied "the keys" to Heaven's portals, and rid it of his presence! Paschasius Radbert, Abbot of Corby, a French monk, first broached, towards the end of the ninth century, that unscriptural, unnatural, and novel doctrine. He was met by a member of his own monastery named Bertram, who zealously and learnedly maintained the old doctrinal simplicity concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper against him. But it is believed that John Scotus, who strenuously and continuously opposed Radbert's opinions, founded the "scholastic system" of theology afterwards established. So greatly adverse to the new notion, however, had been his teaching, that, when Rome enforced the necessity of believing this doctrine, it was thought advisable to depose from his sanctity and damn poor dead John Scott! Scotus, before his death, returned to England, where he gained great renown as a teacher. His books, which were once "holy relics," were burned by Leo IX.'s orders. He was a true Irishman of the true Catholic Church.

Notwithstanding that Ireland's greatness was now rapidly diminishing, and her ardour miserably depressed, she was still unenslaved. Terror was truly struck into her stout heart; but, until the religious corruptions which raged infected her national health, there were chances of a successful rallying. Rome, whose wily agents are never in the outset importunate, and at no time candid, we know, had long since wished to inoculate the scene of Patrick's labours and Palladius's defeat with her denationalizing malady, but avoided rash attempts. Such caution, seldom overstrained, perhaps saved the country, up to this, from a tincture of her heresy. The

blow was, however, too long and watchfully impending not to fall upon a fitting, and only upon a fitting opening. The occasion now offered. Her seductive entreaties to such men as the Danes, without much ado procured for Ireland, under their patronage and protection, Benedictine monks (*Lanigan*). Ever smooth, bland, and, apparently, pious men, they, having obtained a footing, were not slow in ingratiating themselves with every Irishman within reach. Working after this fashion, their influence enlarged. Why the vigilance of our "watchmen on Zion" did not detect the disguised wolves within the fold, the narrative of the times, if it has not already shadowed out, will soon explain. Emboldened by the trifling favours thus conceded, Rome slackened another cord in the Christian camp of Ireland—infused another poisonous drug into our Christian purity. Snugly ensconced behind her "screen of slyness," she, through her agents, who pleaded noble intentions, and seemed not to harbour a sinister design, advised the consecration of a bishop for the Irish Church, by a *foreign prelate*. Sitric, the Danish King of Dublin, in the beginning of the eleventh century, it is believed, became the easy dupe of Rome for perfecting this. He despatched a Danish priest, named Donatus, appointed Bishop of Dublin, to receive consecration from the Bishop of Canterbury. The Danish priests, who were chiefly monks trained in England, little relished the scriptural purity of our national Church; therefore, with eagerness, they encouraged and watched the process of its demolition. Donatus dying, the appointment of his successor, by the Danes, evidenced increasing defiance to existing regulations. This time they elected, from amongst their ranks, a man called Patrick, and sent him, as the other, for consecration to Canterbury. Lanfrane then ruled that great English see as Roman legate. Foreseeing what an advantage to the Papal cause was his growing intercourse with the Dano-Irish princes, as well as Ireland's present, physical, and moral weakness, he resolved to *improve* it! Patrick being consecrated, was *ordered* back, "with commendatory

letters to his king, the King of the Ostmen Godfred." (*Lanigan*, iii.) He was accompanied by a "shower of adulation" from Lanfranc's polished pen, plenteously poured upon all the kings favourable to the "underhand work." Satisfied with the variety and multitude of these disreputable contrivances, he assumed a patronage, and daringly *suggested* a reform of certain *laxities* in the Church government of this kingdom. Having laid a precedent for future interference, he thus went on, gently coaxing a sort of acceptance of his authority. Some of the alleged abuses this alien prelate presumes to note, are, as I gather from his letter, copied by "Ussher" (and Harris's *Ware*), that our Church did not regard matrimony as a sacrament. Further still, that our discipline differed from his (which was Rome's); that our bishops did not consecrate after the custom he was wont to see observed. And what he considered a very serious omission, was the absence of "holy oil," or chrism, in the administration of baptism. This last objection is deemed by Dr. Lanigan (*Ecc. His.* iii.) as wanting force, inasmuch as the Apostles dispensed with the use of chrism. To me all the objections appear in one light intrinsically forcible. They prove that what Cardinal Wiseman may, to-day, with equal justice, censure in our Church, were the subject of remedial *suggestions* by his predecessors, when our fathers lived in the eleventh century; or, briefly, that our present Church is identical with the Church of ancient Ireland.

But, as may be deduced from the overflowing kindness of such audacious and baneful *suggestions*, as Lanfranc thus frequently troubled us with, these so-called "abuses" were gradually swallowed up by his substituted *improvements*. Having prosperously guided his efforts through their first clandestine stages, he daily became less reserved and more bold—to such a pitch, indeed, that the appointment of a successor to a Dano-Irish bishopric was conferred on one of Lanfranc's *own* monks of Canterbury. So far was intrusion now "gone," that this did not in the least amaze *the people*, or arouse them to a sense of danger. Lanigan,

not without reason, on behalf of his party approves of this unusual selection. The spirit breathed in the new prelate's "profession" is quite in sorts with Romanism, and justifies the approval. Hear it:—"I, Donatus, promise canonical obedience to thee, Lanfranc Archbishop of Canterbury, *and to thy successors.*" (*Lanigan*, iii.) Thus that wedge of ruin which, in after time, severed Ireland and pure Christianity, Ireland and independence, Ireland and opulence, was being slyly driven in.

The Romish system is stereotyped, although not infallible. She has ever shown herself deeply infected with the sleek desire to please, but only where it suits her own avarice or ambition. So, notwithstanding the confinedness of her *unchanging* rubric, she is always making loose efforts to accommodate herself and others. In this century of which I am writing (the eleventh), her propensity was indulged in with the same studied elegance of cunning with which *we*, in these kingdoms, have observed it displayed within the last two years. And with the self-same prominent motives that impelled her to seek our nation's ruin before the twelfth century, is she now prompted to regain her lost influence in it. If closely investigated, the similarity, allowing for changes of circumstance and position, is instructively palpable.

The scheme of according power to the foreign prelate of Canterbury, for a long time was gaining ground before the Irish ministers even thought of resenting. The Romanizers had, therefore, time to attain a certain fixity, which the "rather late" resistance could not at once possibly shake. The temporal possessions of the Irish Church were so perturbed and injured by Danish wars and interference, that they became valueless. This was far from being a supreme misfortune. War and its consequences, as already intimated, gave to the clerical office the taint of "soldiering;" but even from being "wielders of the bloody sword," our clergy dwindled into wailing paupers. Religious knowledge was already impaired; it was now unsought for when it might be the highest consolation. Hence the intolerant meddling of

alien ecclesiastics was either unseen or not comprehended, and, therefore, though occasionally denounced, unrestrained. The resistance was like individual zeal unaidedly waging war against a strong ruling faction. And if our ancient clergy, as a body, be blameable, they seem to be, from the causes which brought about their feebleness, not totally inexcusable. Like as now, too, the Church was then unhappily tormented by the wilfully apathetic and conniving, as well as the avowedly aggressive. Then, as now, clergymen of corrupt notions, or tacit or open favourers of the usurpation, instead of resigning their charge, studiously inculcated their vicious views, and thus imperceptibly indoctrinated their respective flocks. To eject these false pastors, and substitute more honest ones, was not in the contemplation, and scarce in the power, of a distracted and enfeebled land. A variety of combined causes, therefore, shielded the evil while it was "sowing and rooting," and the dark-minded planter rejoiced. Tractarianism, to a certain extent, assumes now the same aspect that the stealthy, incursive abominations I write of, did then. While there existed and throve so many and mingled anomalies and checks as these, it is easy to understand how inextricably confused became Ireland's political or ecclesiastical constitution—how quickly, therefore, she was lapsing into error and ruin. *Reflecting minds shuddered at the signs of gloom which everything presented.* Arts, sciences, learning, power, opulence, and peace began of a sudden to show symptoms of decline, and pointless polemical discussions—bitter and rancorous, rather than pious and forbearing—to agitate everything, every person, and every place. The nation became, by little, incensed and alarmed, but was far too feeble to comprehend or defeat the now importunate seductions of the pompous and cunning tempter. Therefore the *deformation* proceeded quite to his desire.

In the year 1095 a fresh opportunity of encouraging foreign jurisdiction presented itself. The Ostman Bishop of Dublin died, and his nephew, Samuel, was chosen for the vacant see, and despatched to Canterbury,

that Anselm, Lanfranc's successor, might consecrate him (*Lanigan*, iii.) Anselm exulted not less than did Lanfranc in the growing disposition of the Dano-Irish to transfer their own, and the independence of those with whom they lived, to the see of Rome, *via* Canterbury. He, therefore, did not now hesitate to favour the Irish ministry with many epistles, chiefly enjoining the bringing of all ecclesiastical disputes before him! For several years he thus kept exciting the necessity of attachment to his see, and even succeeded in advising a synod to be held for the regulation of the affairs of the diocese of Dublin. This council assembled in 1111, and it was followed by another in 1118. Where this last, more important than the first, assembled, we are not informed. (*Lanigan*, iv.) Its decrees, however, are known. By one of them, seventeen sees in Meath were reduced to two—Clonard and Clanmacnoise. No mode could be more skilful to work in concert with the others already employed in clearing the ground for the long-courted and now crowding influence. In this precious synod the clergy were for the first time pleased and pestered with sycophancy. They heard, and credulously enough believed, that theirs was "every amiable quality." Then came an agreeable climax to this adulation—that such virtues, *inherent* in their office, should exempt them from taxation and secular laws; that, therefore, their contributions to the state were to be regarded as gifts; that no bishop should in future exercise a privilege (antiquated so soon) which was had from St. Patrick, that of consecrating other bishops "at pleasure;" that the episcopal sees were in future to be limited, and, to a certain extent, subject to Canterbury. Lanigan details the proceedings of this council in the fourth volume of his "History," and there they will be found *in extenso* as in substance adduced here. These decrees betrayed merely a proper prelude to the personal introduction of the ecclesiastic who publicly played the part of Papal deputy. No such openly accredited personage was yet in the land; although the *secretly*-appointed legate, Gilbert, of Limerick, presided at the assembly I am writing of.

We are now arrived at the critical juncture of our Church's history which required, at least, a more piously persisting man than Celsus, however good in other respects, to occupy the archiepiscopal chair of Armagh. Although under cover of the dignified and easy demeanour of a prelate, he steadfastly disapproved of the reproaches, which the proceedings then at issue cast upon the time-honoured chair he filled, yet he was miserably wheedled out of his moral independence. The means, if not creditable, were masterly. It seems rather odd, though quite consistent with human fallibility, to find that a signal and singular change came over the sympathies of a prelate, whose disapproval of Anslem's assumed authority is thus warmly interpreted, in an address presented by the Dublin burgesses to the foreign prelate:—

“Know thou in all verity, that the bishops of Ireland have great indignation against us; *and most of all, that bishop that dwelleth at Armagh* (Celsus); because we *will* not submit to their ordination, but *will* be always in subjection to thy rule and government.”—(*Ussher and Lanigan.*)

Notwithstanding this “indignation,” so deplorably tintured with the spiritual plague had Celsus soon after become, that he plighted his episcopal word, to appoint as his successor to the See of Armagh, a resolute and ambitious advocate of the usurpation, named Malachy Morgair. This nominee may be characterised as the clever, convenient, and enthusiastic instrument, who worked well and unceasingly, to “set the stone a rolling” of Ireland's *deformation*. Celsus died, but his pet soon ascertained that it was not easy to grasp the primatial crozier upon the conditions he wished. A decided and vexatious contest arose between Malachy and the deceased prelate's relatives. “Forbidding to marry” not being yet branded on the Irish Church, the See of Armagh passed through several generations from father to son (*Ussher and Lanigan*). Malachy had, therefore, a herculean task to clear out of his way the pretensions of the late bishop's sons. Having no desire that a stranger, and one of Malachy's questionable views, should

possess their ancestral bishopric, these people protracted the dispute for a long time. They were, ultimately, either worsted, or advised to suffer the nominee of Celsus to become primate. He did so really about the year 1138. Immediately, in hardly disguised earnesty, the revolution—for it were a calumny on truth, it were a brazen lie to say reformation—was generally and treacherously proceeded with. An outcry against the “indiscriminate reading” of that sacred volume which had made Ireland great, was raised. She rather required an incitement to its study. Cautiously, but carefully, he introduced the gorgeous, yet contemptible, mummeries of Rome, so framed as to evade detection unless by scrutiny. Gilbert found encouragement in his primate’s evident inclination to taint the Church, and next transacts business as the avowed chief commissioner of the Pope (*Lanigan*). He ranks as the first Irish bishop so ambiguously honoured. Before his time, as the Roman Catholic O’Connor remarks, in the *Historical Address*, (i. 10)—“Papal legates had no jurisdiction in Ireland, and after it their jurisdiction was limited to the English settlements.”

Nor did they previously swear allegiance to the Pope, nor subsequently, only in “the pale.” Lest this should be doubted, I refer to the Roman Catholic author, O’Connor (*Columbanus*, iii. 160). Gilbert wore his purple honours with wonderful calmness, but in his aged feebleness how great was his rejoicing of heart, to be able to entrust them to Malachy, so fitted for, and deserving of, the legate’s office (*vide Ussher, Silog.*) If any additional stimulus were needed to urge forward Papal notions, here it was. With incredible rapidity, although without regular strength, they spread throughout a land, rendered by their previous interference mentally weak enough to permit the “bleakest coercion.” A people who had been deprived of their accustomed education, and terribly depressed, soon regarded Malachy as “a great man.” His eloquence and zeal acting upon credulity, ignorance, and excitement, congregated round him crowds of admirers of

himself more than of his "instructions," which they really knew nothing about. Did they see the drift of his teachings, they would look with aversion and scorn at his sinister efforts to destroy utterly what his master's interference was already hastening to ruin. Malachy, not Gilbert, was the man according to the people's taste, and the Pope's own heart. He pandered, with tact and cant, to the country's new desires, and promised largely such "spiritual" donations as the augmenting superstition might be gratified with, while Gilbert was comparatively inactive. He reduced to amazing subjection the Irish princes, already trammelled mentally and regally, while Gilbert fasted and prayed for the exaltation of Rome. The whole country became, in short, poisonously tainted, through his individual but unflagging exertions. Meanwhile a portion of the clergy, though they did not sufficiently distinguish between undiluted Romanism and Christianity, were seriously impressed with the intrusive and invasive character of the Romanizers. They did not, in large numbers, yet conform strictly to the Romish ritual, nor mimic the Papal peculiarities; and, as a body, they by no means equalled the proselytes to the new system, in *outward* indications of zeal or piety. The Pope learned this, and, therefore, denied at that time, Malachy's most earnest request to "honour" Ireland, through him, with the pall or archbishop's mantle. This cautious refusal did not, in the least, deter Malachy from enhancing the high reputation for activity which he had earned. Instead of having our deserted colleges superintended by men eminent and deserving, his "exertions" planted therein, by the advice of St. Bernard, Cistercian monks, who heartily discountenanced the liberal education of old. They were located in Bective, Newry, Baltinglass, Mellifont, and other places; and he, too, first introduced, amidst a tempest of derision, as St. Bernard can hardly deny, Sacraments, such as *Confession*, *Confirmation*, and *Marriage*, which were never received in Ireland before as such. The Irish of old made confession to "God alone." They denied

Rome's other sacraments on grounds equally correct. Marriage was performed by the civil officers, as well as by the clergy. These customs were now boldly destroyed, and the consequent alarm unheeded. But with surpassing calmness and skill, Malachy appeased the anger and animosity with which his strange importations were encountered, although he despised opposition. The unabating, and, indeed, uninterrupted "exertions" with which Malachy prosecuted his master's behests, could not possibly be so accepted, were it not that he had first rendered the people utterly destitute of scriptural knowledge, and excluded, by degrees, the right of "private judgment," of which their fathers had so much reason to be proud. Having felt what Rome has ever felt, that "knowledge is a power," and its exercise irresistible, he provided, and circumstances had, unhappily, long contributed to that provision, that such inseparable associates should not block up his progress, and they did not. There is something very ingenious, although insolent, in the manner his friend St. Bernard (in vol. iii. of his *Life of Malachy*) depicts the state of Ireland, when that great Romaniser was appointed to the Bishopric of Connor :—

"Then this man of God (Malachy) felt that he was appointed, *not over MEN, but over BEASTS*. Never before had he met with men in *such barbarity* ; never before had he found men *so stubborn against morals, so deadly to rites, so impious against faith, so savage to laws, so stiffnecked against discipline, &c.* *Christians in name, pagans in reality.* Not one could be found who would pay tithes or first-fruits ; make *confessions* ; ask for *penances*, or give them ; or contract lawful marriages, &c. At length, however, the *fierceness* yields ; the *barbarism* begins to give way ; the *persecuting (exasperans)* race begins to be softened, and to receive correction and discipline ; *savage rites* are done away, and *THE ROMAN rites are introduced* ; the usages of the Church are every where received ; the sacraments are duly celebrated ; *confessions* are made."

But Malachy's exploits and talents, invaluable to the See of Rome, were not to be for ever available. He died "in the arms of St. Bernard," on his way to Rome,

for his cherished but unobtained Frock or pallium, after having, as his canonised biographer relates—

“Laid the axe at the root, plucked up and pulled down *barbarous rites*, and planted *ecclesiastical ones*; abolished old superstitions; and planted in their stead, *the apostolical enactments and decrees of the holy fathers*, AND ESPECIALLY THE USAGES OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH. *And, then, the most wholesome use of Confession, the sacrament of Confirmation, the contract of Marriage; all which, this people before were either ignorant of, or did neglect, Malachy instituted de novo.*”

How exceedingly uncomplimentary, and yet how true when properly construed, are these passages, actually taken from Bernard's *Life of Malachy*. The gravity is pitiable with which he speaks of the removal of superstition (primitive Christianity) and the establishing in its stead, of what? Read the passage and judge! Malachy lived long enough to lay the foundation stone in Ireland of dependence on Rome's superstition and irreligion; depravity, poverty, and utter inability to uphold her customary authority or place amongst nations ensued. The unremitting and successful vigilance of Malachy was rewarded with the first “honour” of the kind ever bestowed upon an Irishman—he was *canonised*. Never did subject of pagan or apostate Rome better deserve this flattering compliment so similarly administered by both—deification!

A mind conscious of doing wrong, if detected, is not shaken generally by remorse or cowardice, but emboldened by a shameless confidence. Rome affords us an illustration in all her acts. Again, the justice of one's cause sustains with honourable assurances his efforts towards its success. History swarms with examples. Rome and Ireland stood one to the other in these relations now. Some among our ministers saw the beast's shadow reflected in Papal doings, and took alarm. Upheld by the spirit of that expression of Paul's, “Living or dying we are the Lord's,” they denied the godliness of an adversary whom they exposed and disgraced. These symptoms of discontent were insignificant, but may be portentous. So Rome, like a thief

alarmed lest a bush may be a detective officer, assumed that our country was about to proclaim its original spirit, and defy the pernicious attempt at subjugation. To cast, as it were, sounding lines, and to do what he best could towards the quelling of such an unwelcome inspiration, "His Holiness" shipped hither in all haste Cardinal John Papario (*Lanigan*, iv.) It would be more than provoking to Papal spirits, if now, when the poison was "mixed and laid," the antidote secured the victims from its touch or taste. Far too sensitive on such matters, it would be passing strange if the famous cheater of human and national independence was inactive. His emissary, therefore, came to see what could be done to settle the wavering "slavedom." He came loaded with plenteous blessings and baubles, seeking to crown the work of a hundred years. He came striving to stamp on the falling nation the insignia of defeat and degradation. He came heartily anxious to consummate the work of Ireland's ruin and his master's hope.

Papario, I believe the first genuine specimen of Papal royalty that ever pressed Ireland's soil, landed at Armagh in the commencement of the year 1151. To promote the manifold views of attaining his main object, it was desirable to establish a synodical action, which Malachy, with all his vigour and ability, failed to invest with qualities tasteful enough for the nation. Therefore, on the 9th of March, after his arrival, he convoked a council which met at Kells. But considering that Ireland then possessed a vast number of bishops, and that only twenty honoured the meeting with their presence, an efficient stimulus, it is easily perceived, was not yet given to their Romish inclinations. This indifference, too, in the face of the promised bestowal of the long-coveted pallium! However, the council met. The Cardinal came and presided. We are told that upon it being intimated that the bag which contained the "treasure" was about to unloose its "woollen" captive, great inquietude seized the innocent prelates. All were on tip-toe with anxiety to see—what?

"A white piece of woollen cloth of the breadth of a border, made round, to be thrown over the neck. Upon this are two

others of the same sort, one falling down on the breast, the other on the back, filled with red crosses. This pall having been laid on St. Peter's tomb is sent away to the several metropolitans, without the reception of which they cannot perform any of their episcopal functions."—(*Comerford*, p. 256.)

If this Roman Catholic historian, who has thus so kindly described for me the gift now about being exhibited, speaks truly, what becomes of the validity of the functions of those prelates preceding the Council of Kells, as they were not so favoured, although Rome claims them? Now, however, these functions were about being rendered Romishly perfect. The bag was opened. Gelaseus, who governed the See of Armagh, of all the assembled prelates, seemed self-possessed. But then he is elate with confidence, the "woollen pall" being promised to Malachy's see alone.

But lo! to the primate's consternation, instead of one cloak, specially designed for his see, FOUR drop from the bag. One of these *he* receives, the other three fall to the lot of the agreeably amazed bishops of Tuam, Cashel, and Dublin. One amongst other decrees passed after this pretty distribution of blessed cloaks, ordered that all village bishoprics should, on the death of their present occupants, be abolished, and thence entitled "rural deaneries." This custom, which much prevailed in Ireland, was borrowed from those churches superintended by St. John in the East. It was now, however, with other "abuses," to be "pulled down."

Although treaties had been favourably negotiated by Papario, though the formation of a Papal hierarchy had been well set on foot, the Pope's camp was far from possessing a permanency in the land. Ireland's increasing and encouraged ignorance might have indicated an attachment to such principles as had been spread; but the novelty and mode of the inculcation, and the probability of enlightenment in time of peace might render it unenduring. The wedge, whose end was now craftily introduced, might then be suddenly jerked out. Some of Rome's innumerable blunders and acts of tyranny, after her possession appeared secure, might give a rude shock to the entire fabric, whose con-

sistence "his holiness" had cause to doubt. There was needed, therefore, very badly, a something which Papal ingenuity did not long search for in vain. Fresh and furious war was requisite to divert and perplex the nation's attention, in order that in the presence of immediate personal danger might be kept out of view the less pressing, but more terrific, spiritual danger, which Rome purposed quietly and unobserved to scatter through the feuds she hoped to create. She clearly needed to urge the island into a war likely to last so long as that she could steep in blood, and, as it were, impress indelibly on her unconscious and bleeding victim's heart the religious notions which had corrupted herself. But such a horrid mission should be directed by a minion trained to head it properly. Rome was not long in quest of one chivalrous (!) enough to lavish stripes upon an unoffending and weakened nation; to keep the "carnal weapon" with consummate ingratitude and daring skill, pressed upon noble Ireland's neck; and to do this so covertly, that the real but concealed enemy should not appear in other light than that of benefactor! All this with hereditary expertness she has achieved, as subsequent events show.

From the historical facts briefly narrated in this chapter, it is evident that Ireland's enslavement had begun, and merely begun. The national dignity and sacred purity of that Church which had given true Gospel missionaries to the world—which had elevated to a mighty and most prosperous condition an island, and maintained it so for a thousand years, appears now seriously, but not mortally, smitten. And with its suffering, the nation it so exaltedly adorned, manifests an aspect of pitiable prostration. The dominancy of pure Christianity has already proved its salutary effects. Now that its sacred influences had considerably abated, we shall find that, however gorgeous and sumptuous, illusory and pleasing its substitute and opposite may be, our country's glory, purity, power, and national grandeur as steadily vanished.

CHAPTER III.

(FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.)

OLD IRELAND BETRAYED AND BOUGHT — PAPAL
AGGRESSIONS PROCEED—ROME'S RELIGION
IRELAND'S RUIN.

Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it—*Jer.* vii. 29–30. And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken my law, and have not obeyed my voice, but have walked in the imagination of their own hearts; therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Hosts, Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink—*Jer.* ix. 13–15.

As much as the first Papal aggression under Celestine V. was a failure, the second under Adrian IV. was a triumph, deadly and fatal. But it was only on its being backed by a fierce and bloody aggression upon our national and civil rights that a permanency was secured to its frame-work. It was yet but as a thin, fragile skeleton, wanting body, or as a shell-wall without a buttress. Such an essential was not left unsupplied.

England's kings, for a considerable time, coveted the possession of Ireland. We have several instances of their designs to invade a people, whom Bede, relating the fact, calls "an innocent race, ever friendly to the English." Hanmer furnishes us with an indication of the "invasive spirit" which, from the honest truth and Scriptural marrow it contains as characteristic of our kings, even at the end of the eleventh century, I annex:—

"Cambrensis, in his *Itinerarie*, reporteth how that King William (Rufus), standing upon some high rocks in the furthest

part of Wales, beheld Ireland, and said, 'I will have the ships of my kingdom brought hither, wherewith I will make a bridge to invade Ireland.' Murchardt, King of Leinster, heard thereof; and, after he had paused a while, asked the reporter, 'Hath the king, in that his great threatening, inserted these words, *'if it please God?'* 'No.' 'Then,' said he 'seeing this king putteth his trust only in man, and not in God, we fear not his coming.'

If the mouth "speaketh out of the abundance of the heart," this prince's moral disposition is at once discerned. So, also, as it is not generally an unfair test to judge a species by a specimen, there will be no difficulty in discriminating the predilections of the Irish chieftains at this time.

However fondly the kings of England entertained the notion of invading this country, it was a mere matter of expediency—quite desirable, but rather hazardous—until Henry the Second occupied the throne. Events cotemporary, or nearly so, had reduced the greatest difficulties which hitherto seemed to beset such an exploit. Observing them daily disappear under the destructive influence of Rome, Henry took courage and inclined to hope. Papal religious snares, and Papally kindled political treachery, were seasoning Ireland for his evil conquest. He exultingly saw how she was being straitened, and cautiously planned the best manner of "pinching" her more to help himself. A skilful schemer instinctively ferrets out an equally "honourable" associate. Henry was one royally endowed, but not above his craft. He procured an "honourable abettor" just as the "honourable abettor" pantingly sought him. Bent on the same unrighteous course, kindred reflections brought their infernal machinations to the same unholy point. What was said in the last chapter relative to the *necessities* of "his holiness" are not, I trust, here forgotten. The Pope of Rome, who, after this fashion, became Henry's aspiring and "honourable abettor," was an Englishman, who, by the way, as Lanigan (vol. iv.) has it, received a classical (no allusion is made to a moral or religious) education from an Irishman. He bore the name of Nicholas Breakspeare before he as-

sumed that of Adrian IV., and ascended the Papal throne, about the time Henry became England's king. I do not think that Breakspeare or any other Romish prelate is guilty of that fallible and human feeling—national sympathy—only as far as he is chargeable with possessing domestic sympathies, of which he can have none. These ties are severed by his unnatural and unchristian connexion with “the Church.” Therefore it is wrong to suppose that Breakspeare purposed selling Ireland's independence for the sake of England. He learned the ambitious dreamings of Henry, and aimed at mischief through them. Wanting to establish Papal jurisdiction in poor Ireland, he made no departure from his selfishness, and gave no proof of his nationality in desiring, according to Pole, to gratify the king in order to serve his own see. “The end justified the means.” At this time the notorious à-Becket, since elevated to a niche in the Roman gallery of gods (not Rome pagan, but apostate), was archdeacon under Theobald of Canterbury. He and the Bishop of Salisbury were the real “judicious bottle-holders” between king and pope, aided by a few others. Through these wily priests and slavish courtiers was played the desperate and vengeance-bringing game of a kingdom's ruin. A cowardly but crafty league was instantly drawn up between both. The King was to subjugate by force the land for himself, and give a marked portion of the spoil to his “panting abettor.” The Pope's principal part in the act would be to work, by his forged and arrogant claim of authority in all Christian isles, upon the superstitious fears of some and the sworn fidelity of others. To keep up certain appearances and to avoid betraying eagerness, Henry was advised—when the compact was already complete—to represent to the Pope that in Ireland the greatest irreligion, ignorance, and impiety reigned. He made a mock request, therefore, that “his holiness”

“Would license his entering into the island of Ireland in a hostile manner, and that he would allow him to subdue the country, and bring over those beastly fellows to the faith, and to the path of truth.”—*Lanigan*.

This brazen demand for infraction of existing civil rights was merely a pre-arranged episode in the action of the drama itself. To it Adrian's response was hearty and prompt. Blasphemously asserting, on the authority of a document proven to be false, that whatever land Christianity was preached in, did of "right belong to his see" (Usher, *Sylog.*), he empowered, and appointed by a Papal *bull*, Henry, his "beloved son," to confirm in the faith and Church, by physical endeavours, these wayward islanders. In other words, to Romanise by the Saxon steel, the Irish nation, which seemed too tardy in accepting his own theological suaves—to plant his supremacy, no matter how murderously, in Ireland. This bull, in the words of Moore (*Hist.* vol. ii.)—

"Was accompanied by A STIPULATION for the payment to St. Peter of a penny annually from every house in Ireland; this being the price for which the independence of the Irish people was thus bartered away. Together with the bull, containing the grant and stipulation, was sent also to Henry a gold ring adorned with a valuable emerald, as a token of his investiture with the right to rule over Ireland; and this ring, we are informed by the bearer of it, John of Salisbury, was, by Adrian's orders, deposited in the public archives."

How deplorable that the "mammon of unrighteousness" became noble Ireland's captor! An English pope of Rome, haggling with an English king, sealed Ireland's doom, and prepared the soil for the fullest crop of Romanism. Worthy accompaniment of so unworthy a deed!

Although Henry possessed this "bull," several years passed by before he was able to avail himself of it. But a notorious occurrence, as unusual in this country as it was favourable to the invaders, soon gave an open and a direction to the impending storm. The new missionaries did not come decked in Rome's accustomed and attractive finery, though clothed in her steel armour and stone hearts. Their progress was marked, where was found plentuously reeking the best blood of the land.

No reader of Irish history need be informed how,

wrapt in fury, the "beastly prince" (as Lanigan styles him), Dermot MacMurrough, after frantic and ruinous attempts to avenge the "betrayal of his honour" at home, made a frenzied and faithless begging overture to Henry the Second of England. I presume all are intimate with the confusion and panic which the joyful granting of his application produced in Ireland. It was wonderfully favourable to the designs then actually settled. I suppose the brutal butcheries connected with the vigorous and sanguinary warfare which ensued, crushing the very heart of the kingdom, are well known. These facts are ever prominent in historical paintings of Ireland and not severed from their cause; I need not, therefore, recapitulate things of so lamentable a notoriety.

It is well known that, with such heart-rending visitations was the real "beginning of the consummation" of Ireland's destruction. Every town, district, and hamlet, was plunged, in a brief period, into frightful agitation. Blood, tumult, imposture, characterised the day. The Romish baubles, which, in the shape of doctrines, were heretofore toyed with, soon became enforced as sacred and necessary wherever the hostile army could reach. In other places, where from causes but passing away, the deepest ignorance had stultified the people, the "doctrines" were represented as *preservatives* in so dismal a crisis. All enlightenment was sapped, and the monks, then thickening upon us, took an opportunity to represent the privately courted invasion as heaven's vengeance because of Ireland's dilatoriness in receiving Romish doctrines! These combined influences had the desired effect. To bring them about, the battle was pitched; and together Ireland's prosperity, Christianity, and nationality were utterly crushed. Men grew desperate, and ferocious. Religion was buried in anger and desperation; and the country cast rapidly into superstition, infidelism, or Romanism. There was then neither time, inclination, nor capacity to test the soundness or justice of any doctrinal innovation; and the consummate skill of Rome's troops suggested the removal of the Bible, and the destruction of our religious

records. These, by some chance, might lead people who had not drank too deep of error, and had time for thought, to debate on truth. Thus God, in his inscrutable judgment, suffered the conflict to turn in favour of Rome and Romanism. Thus, when Ireland's nationality was being conquered, her early religion was being banished. And this unspeakably great calamity, which to this day Ireland groans under, was worthy of Pope and Romanism—worthy of the master and murderer of à-Becket—worthy of all the profligacy and cruelty of those engaged to effect it.

Henry arrived at Waterford in the October of 1171, and received the homage of those whom he had already commissioned to make sad havoc in the country, as well as of many Irish nobles who timorously tendered their allegiance to him, under the advice of Danish monks. He found that the extent of his "knights'" savage and wanton cruelty towards the *beastly Irish*, had greatly estranged those members of the yet not totally enslaved Church, who were, without Danish admixture, natives. Henry, by every means, sought to persuade them to obedience, but a vast share of them nobly spurned the solicitations of an usurper, whose arms were deeply and brutally tarnished. He observed, too, with some uneasiness, that the "ceremonies and customs" of our country's religion, though very materially tampered with, were, as generally practised, far from being yet in unity with Rome's. He had, therefore, to extort ungraciously a reluctant acceptance "in toto," of his master's "mumeries."

There was, indeed, nothing formidable, now at least, in the religious enthusiasm of the Irish, scattered and oppressed by three hundred years of dire contentions. The victims of strife, internally and externally, were powerless. He, therefore, reasonably hoped to be able to dictate terms, but not by working incautiously. With this view, he ordered to be assembled a council at Cashel, in 1172, to which he sent his own chaplain. Almost all the bishops and archbishops of Ireland were present. This assembly was presided over by the Pope's

legate, then Bishop of Lismore. Cambrensis, in his elaborate history of the invasion, gives an accurate account of its enactments. At it much of the old church system was abolished ; the legitimate and politic equality of clergy and laity effaced ; the free and olden custom of the celebration of divine service interdicted, under the guise of moderation and improvement ; the decrees respecting the immunity of the clergy from certain laws and taxes, already mooted at the Council of Kells, were here passed ; tithes were established on a new principle, and the faithful commanded to give their ministers a third of their goods for masses ! “ Wakes ” were ordered to be kept ! In short, Romanism, which hitherto existed *in sufferance* here, was now solemnly yoked upon the nation.

But despite of this “ insolent and insidious ” adjustment of our ecclesiastical laws, the hills and fastnesses of the kingdom sheltered many who could not consent to bow to Baal ; who would not receive, without clearer definitions or stronger safeguards, new rules, or infringe upon existing ones. Where the conquerors had not yet penetrated, the “ *clergy and people*,” says Lanigan, “ *followed their own ecclesiastical rules as if the Synod of Cashel had never been held.* ” From the prevalence even yet of our ancient Irish Christianity, as Cambrensis observes, the Irish were deemed by the conquerors “ no better than heretics.” For a time, it seemed highly probable that such firm and well-disposed ministers, many of whom, says Geraldus, “ were reduced to beggary for their steadfastness,” would restore the realm to a sense of duty, although its resistance may be ineffectual. But there was, in truth, no need to fear. As I have elsewhere intimated, I now affirm, that an age would be requisite to restore Ireland to at least Scriptural education, before an attempt to destroy even the anomalies and abuses, which sprung from an absence of such knowledge, could be popular or successful. Our colleges had all disappeared, and, as Lanigan says (vol. v.), “ it would be fruitless to inquire when ; but it is reasonable to suppose the thirteenth century.” The time

was, therefore, most opportune for all Rome's attractive and deluding importations, and her dross soon circulated as the purest gold ; her supremacy first crept in, not by decrees, but by practice ; self-merit, image-worship, fitness for canonisation, saintly intercession and Mariolatry, were gradually proclaimed "Christian doctrines." Relic worship, and other such singular practices, as Lanigan plainly shows (vol. iii.), were *forced* amongst the people by the monks. Though some could scarcely stifle their derision and execration at such impostures, the simple, impressible, and fitter still, the now restless, and, alas ! at length, ignorant Irish, as a body, evinced, by an alarming, though accountable, humility and suavity, in their acceptance of them, how terrible had been their fall !

While Ireland's religion was being thus rifled and regulated, war, as the deformer's guardian, fierce, general, and bloody, with all its calamities, depravities and horrors, devastated the country. Civilisation seemed to have been superseded by the worst barbarity. Those engaged in it, as the tools of ambition or Rome, *procured pardon* for all their revolting crimes, by founding and endowing abbeys ! "*This*," says Lanigan (vol. iv.), became "a fashionable mode of purchasing off sins and *obtaining forgiveness from heaven !*" Such a shocking method of "securing full atonement" for crime, had its means of gratifying a deluded and falling people.

The obstinacy which the Irish practically exhibited to the Saxon invasion, though slowly growing less great, was very harassing to the incursionists. To abate it, Henry, upon the appointment, in 1177, of a successor to Strongbow, the first English chief governor of this country, ordered the new deputy, Fitzandelm, to convene a meeting at Waterford, and there to read the Pope's bull, consigning to him the island. Adrian was then dead ; but Henry had procured the confirmation of the grant by his successor Alexander III., which was also read (*Lanigan*). Henry exhibited much sagacity in his withholding the bull until this time. The islanders were not, on his first arrival, so well prepared to

hear themselves insulted by the unflattering epithets applied to their character in that bull. They were now, however, as recipients of Romanism, more likely to suffer indignity, especially when it came from the "infallible" head of that system. Henry wisely inferred that the newly-acquired influence, if so acted upon, would bring his authority in the island to a favourable and decisive crisis. Whereupon he undertook this, the most polished and less irksome, method to incline the clergy, who held the people's wills, to succumb, if not to him, to his "master."

Ireland was now, if not entirely, deeply corrupted. Saxons settled in the land, who soon became "more Irish than the Irish themselves"—so much had our fathers departed from the path of Ireland's nationhood. Her ministers, to elevate themselves, bartered her independence, having lost their own. But they partook of the curse. Henry did not deal so munificently with them as they had expected. Their functions were, indeed, of a standard unknown in the early times, and the reverence and authority which it was necessary to yield them after the Cashel Assembly, compensated for much. But several of the more prominent prelates, led on by Lawrence O'Toole, who was the first Archbishop of Dublin fully exercising that office as subject to Rome, retained enough of her earlier days to protest against the English monarch's insincerity. O'Toole, the head of the rising malcontents, was a proud, ambitious man, full of Jesuitical deception, when it was necessary to disguise his projects, but not otherwise of ill-conditioned life (*Lanigan* and *Usher*). He remonstrated with Henry on the little good to the clergy which their admission of the supremacy, arrogated by the Pope, was productive of. Henry, deluged with other pressing matters, and not now apprehending danger from Ireland, was silent. But O'Toole, having some faint notion of the glittering beauties of Romanism at its home, and feeling indignant at the royal contempt, was glad to accept of a mission to complain on this subject to the Pope himself. Accordingly he set out, and having

arrived at the Vatican, eloquently made known his grievance. The Pope sympathised, and elevated him to the rank of legate, with authority to *order* the king to settle the dispute between himself and the Irish prelates. But the poor bishop died in Normandy, before he returned to Ireland, about the year 1181. He was soon after enrolled in the "book of sanctity," and is now, we all know, earnestly invoked as an intercessor between God and Roman Catholics. Malachy was the first, and O'Toole the second, Irishman upon whom Rome conferred the "dignity" of canonisation.

The vacancy occasioned in the Irish episcopacy by "St. Lawrence's" demise, was now, for the first time, disposed of by a foreign prince, and his nomination submitted for confirmation to a Pope. Henry was the king; Lucius III. then superintended Rome; and a person named Comyn was the chosen bishop. If the country even could discern what disasters such proceedings, stealthily starting into magnitude, were likely to entail, its energies were so spent, that it could not well lament, much less oppose them.

A curious bull was at that time fulminated, which strikingly resembles a recent Papal act, and shows Rome's designing pliancy. I allude to the appointment, the other day, of Dr. Cullen, *from* the Romish primatial chair of Armagh, *to* that system's bishopric of Dublin. The first Englishman (Comyn) pawned by a Pope on the latter diocese, came, furnished by a Papal decree elevating the see of Dublin to greater precedence than that of Armagh. This remarkable occurrence, quite characteristic of Rome, is explained by Ware, in his *Archbishops of Dublin* (p. 314). By the way, for five centuries after Comyn's nomination, *natives* were excluded from the metropolitan see!

An incident which occurred the year after O'Toole's death, though trifling, is full of significance. In the train of De Cogan, the celebrated Cambrensis visited Ireland a second time. He travelled through the country with a view of ascertaining necessary facts which might serve Prince John in his intended government of the country.

During one of his excursions, he met the then Bishop of Cashel, to whom he proposed several questions classified for his purpose. In replying to some of them, the bishop dwelt on the eminence in learning and piety of many of the old Irish *saints*. The historian looked at the prelate, and, in a mocking tone, exclaimed, "SAINTS! Perhaps you have saints, but where are your martyrs?" The prelate was not amazed, and coolly replied:—

"It must be acknowledged, that as yet our people have not learned such enormous guilt as to murder God's servants; but *now that Englishmen have settled in our island*, and that Henry is our sovereign, we may soon expect enough of martyrs to take away this reproach from our Church."

Alas! the pure light of that Church was then nearly extinguished, and Cambrensis returned to England to assure his monarch that monkery was expanding in the land, being espoused by the Irish in all its qualities. As evidence, he could point to the foundation, while he was in Ireland, of monasteries at Holycross, Colp, and Dunbrody. In fact, all the leaders of the invasion made it a point to establish, of himself, an institute of monkery, and it soon spread more tellingly the Papal influence. Lanigan supplies many instances of the hatred with which modern monkery was, notwithstanding, received in Ireland (vol. iv.)

Henry II. died at Chinons, in Normandy, in a most miserable state, entrusting the forcible preaching of Romanism, and further subjugation of Ireland, to his eldest son, who ascended the English throne as Richard I., in 1189. At this time the country became, as it never was before, infested by robbers. The "Isle of Saints" degraded to a land of thieves! The "Asylum of Piety" fallen to a retainer and refuge of assassins and villains! All the elements of unworthiness, melted into one homogeneous mass, did indeed completely overwhelm the kingdom! And this was the result of Rome's usurped supremacy and doctrines! This the price of apostasy!

The first dazzling scene with which Rome feasted her "new territory," was the consecration of St. Patrick's Cathedral, which was, according to Ware, erected in

1190. The "highest prelates" in the land, directed by the Pope's legate, attended, and conducted the ceremony with pomp and magnificence. A country which heretofore exhibited honest and scriptural hostility to any assimilation of a creature with the Creator, joyfully received the announcement that the new church was *dedicated* not only to God, but to "our blessed lady Mary and St. Patrick." This I find in Mason's *History of Ireland's Patron*.

Richard died A.D. 1199, at which time the Papal power had reached its altitude in Europe, under Pope Innocent III. John, a younger brother, succeeded Richard, and assumed the title and collected the advantages of "Lord of Ireland."

The wrongs which had been inflicted on, and, to a great extent, passively sustained by the Irish, rendered them, even to the new religion, sometimes as unwittingly disrespectful as sacrilegious; and thoroughly dishonourable in most matters. An instance is afforded to us in the bitter contentions which envy had originated between the powerful invading chiefs, De Lacy and De Courcy. With little spirit and less generosity, De Courcy, being defeated in a general engagement, resorted to treachery in order to destroy his formidable rival. The priests, who consorted with him, easily procured ruffians to accept a bribe and an off-hand acquittal of the crime! in order to accomplish the fiendish deed of despatching him by assassination. He was apprised, however, of the murderous intent, and asked his confessor's advice, as there was no chance of his being at all times provided with aid. The monk reminded him that he should never be unprepared for the call of God, no matter how it would come—he knew not. This was well. But the requisite preparation, according to the monk, was an immediate penitential pilgrimage to the churchyard of Downpatrick alone; and, while thus engaged, he need not dread the worst malignity of his foes! To the churchyard De Lacy accordingly piously repaired. But some of his actual domestics, regardless of the priestly curse or cause, treacherously informed

De Courcy's friends, who came upon the beguiled baron while on his knees before a crucifix. Upon seeing them, he cursed his credulity; and, as if to retrieve the fault, grasped eagerly the crucifix to which he had been praying, and with it made desperate havoc, killing a dozen of his assailants! But his resistance proving ineffectual, he cast his idol from him, and yielded. This, then an ordinary skirmish, deserves being recorded, because in it we can trace a precedent for "pattern fights" and the "progressive spirit!" of Romanism.

But the aptitude which seems inherent in the Papal system for every species of broil, was not even then confined to the laity. Natives or strangers knew no peace since it and its supporters were cast upon the land. Not the least striking, in the wide range of ecclesiastical skirmishes, was that consequent upon De Valois's appropriation of church revenues for his army. "St." Lawrence O'Toole's successor, Comyn, having failed to arrest the "sacrilegious hand," even by the loud roar of altar denunciations—then commencing to add fresh disgrace to the fallen Church—produced a miracle, as evidence of the sanctity of his grievance! The spirit of winking and bleeding pictures was then, for the first time, invoked in Ireland, and was pleased to be propitious! Comyn, with all episcopal dignity, clothed, as it were, in the profoundest affliction, stood up in his cathedral, and spoke—when, lo! (under the obsequious hands of his spiritual bondmen) crucifixes were laid prostrate, and mockingly crowned with thorns, to betoken the great sorrow of Christ, "as if the majesty of heaven were dethroned by a contest about the property of an ecclesiastic." This impious procedure, related by Lanigan and Ware, not having such force as was anticipated, the bishop fled, having laid his diocese under an interdict, by which all religious rites were completely suspended. But De Valois repented, "and granted to the see of Dublin twenty *carrucates* or ploughshares," as an atonement for his offences.

Nor were disputes merely of this character. The system was soon felt in its unmixedly noxious reality;

and yet the Irish race were so lost as not to lift, but in faintness, a voice against its odious progress. The year 1205 witnessed the first great dispute between a pope and a king, with Ireland as the apple of discord. To Ware I am indebted for its substance (*Bishops*, pp. 62-64). An English nominee of King John to the see of Armagh in that year, was opposed by an Irishman, the selected of "his holiness's" deputy. But though the contest was very sharp and protracted, Romish gold, plentifully proffered to the English king, made "his highness" quite agreeable in relinquishing a prerogative, which no pope ever before looked for—viz., that of *directly* nominating bishops to Ireland's vacant sees. Another star in the oppressor's tiara was this victory over John; and what, think you, accompanied it? Significant associates!—a frightful plague, which sadly thinned the ranks of our country; and a miserable slaughter of "mere Irish," which begat deserving animosity. The plague ravaged all Leinster, and ruined Dublin. The dastardly butchery took place at Cullenswood, where better than 500 men, women, and children, were barbarously slaughtered to gratify Popish invaders, and a festival to commemorate the event appointed! But this was only a result to which the now degraded Irish were latterly inured.

John, who never ruled himself, and attempted to govern Ireland, died two years after he had made an inglorious compact with the Pope against whom he so long resolutely contended, and was succeeded, in 1216, by his eldest son, Henry III. Now only half a century had elapsed since the invasion, and Ireland was reduced in power and position as if she had never known strength, learning, piety and civilisation. Her chieftains became insignificant beggars, her ministers brawling agitators, and her invaders intolerant rulers. Irish laws were demolished, and Anglo-Irish laws, even where England's arms kept faithful watch, despised. The strong oppressed the weak, and the weak had no redress. Everything gave way to priestly threats, which were soon regarded with the most superstitious awe.

Henry III., little regarding Ireland's social or moral advancement, instead of applying a remedy to her many evils, extorted, from her narrow resources, all the money procurable, to support his warring exploits in other lands. But he was not the most daring and exorbitant applicant for her funds. The Pope, abounding in "holy things," was very profuse of his "sacred" gifts in exchange for solid gold; very bountiful in levying "holy taxes" among the clergy, who repaid themselves by working on the superstitious fears of the people. Between king, pope, and priests, never was poor land so dreadfully torn and wasted. Contributions were then as lavish as they are now for every pretty toy of "sacredness" which Rome can vend, or in support of every babbling sycophant which the occasion might demand and supply. Ireland was obliged to endure of this sort more than I can relate. She was become a willing, or rather stupid, slave, having been whipped to a skeleton by heartless tyrants!

We now-a-days can well conceive to what lengths the dominant spirit of priestcraft can go, otherwise a historian would find it difficult to make credible many occurrences originated by such men in times past. For instance—and a better one could not be chosen to indicate the superstitious hold with which Romanism had now grasped the Irish nation—when the famed Lord Pembroke had provoked ecclesiastical censure, by the seizure of some church manors belonging to Ferns, the bishop of that diocese excommunicated him, and he died with the bans unrevoked. Upon the death of his foe, the Bishop of Ferns demanded that the king would give him up the claimed property. But Henry's reply required that the *deceased* earl should be absolved in his tomb! Accordingly, in order to procure land for the loss of which he damned (so far as he could) a soul, he next undertook to recall that soul from hell!! Here are his words, most solemnly pronounced at the earl's grave, in the presence of the king and nobles:—

"Oh! William, thou that liest fast bound in the chain of excommunication, if what thou hast injuriously taken away be restored by the king, or his heirs, or any of thy friends, with compe-

tent satisfaction, I absolve thee!! Otherwise I ratify thy sentence, that, being bound in thy sins, thou mayest remain damned in hell for ever!!!"

This miserable fact is related by Leland (vol. i.), and corroborated by Dr. Phelan, who asks—"Could he have relied on the efficacy of this anti-Christian anathema?" With such impiety, such un-Gospel proceedings, all parties were devoutly pleased. Nay! if the bishop did not re-rivet the chains upon the (supposed) damned soul, when his heirs "heretically" despised his malediction by keeping the lands, people would not think him "solidly holy." So lowered, so *paganised*, had Ireland become, that these extravagances of the priests, however wild, were not rejected. Although the suffering of the "faithful" under interdicts, which were often had recourse to when money or obedience was wanted, grew very distressing, the people were listlessly passive. They were fined, cursed, cudgelled, publicly disgraced, or murdered, as the malignity or wants of the priestly persecutor thought fit (*Leland*, vol. i.) So far did they go in such doings, that the Pope, the very Pope, was obliged to moderate their fury and their avarice. Their "fighting" propensities were just as great. I will notice one from amid the many disgusting brawls for "a mess of pottage" which disgraced the annals of 1210. A dispute, originating in a trifle, carried on between two rival bishops of Waterford and Lismore, is related by Ware, in his *Bishops* (p. 528). The contest, which was continued long with hellish venom, terminated by the decapitation of Lismore, through the machinations of his enemy, after he had suffered most cruel tortures in prison! Charity, peace, and kindness, in the coldest sense, had left our clergy, or rather usurpers of the clerical office, with whom avarice became the god!

Edward I. succeeded Henry in 1273, at which time Maurice Fitzmaurice was deputy. Many of our country's political grievances met a well-meaning heart when they were told to Edward's. But the country was, as it were, pursued by a curse, and all goodly intentions were ever fraught with disappointment.

The first Parliament met in Ireland under Sir John De Wogan, about the year 1295. It was incapable of grappling with the terrible disarrangement of the kingdom. Ireland was still plagued with mischievous contention, and the cruelty and rapaciousness of the clergy enforcing the most oppressive edicts. These were, in many cases, protested against. From several recorded I may offer one—that of a noble woman belonging to the province of Munster, called Lady Le Blunde. In her petition to Edward she complains against the Bishop of Cashel, for, amidst other monstrous deeds—

“Imprisoning her grandfather and grandmother, where they died of hunger; for seeking redress on account of her father’s death, killed by said bishop; and for the loss of her six brothers and sisters, starved to death by said bishop, because he had their inheritance in his hands at the time he killed their father.”

Leland (vol i.) details at length the atrocities here complained of. With such conduct as this characterising the nation’s Church, what good could be expected? These instances of Rome’s successful blasphemy and intolerance which I have adduced, are not solitary. Terrible as are the lengths to which the newly-acquired sway of the clergy was carried, they were of more terrific frequency. Rome’s history in Ireland is pregnant with such miserable polity. To it must honest truth ascribe the irreligion, the dark deeds, the mournful superstition, the grovelling nature, which became, as it were, ingrafted in the soil and in the nature of its inhabitants.

Under the reigns of Edwards II. and III., from 1307 to 1377, our poor country’s prospects did not revive, or look in the least promising. New wars, fresh-poisoned party disputes, and consequent pretexts for clerical agitation and tyranny, protracted the agonies of our exhausted island. Troops under the Scotch hero, Bruce, made Erin a battle-ground against England’s monarch, for royal spoil. Party turned against party—tribe against tribe, influenced, generally, by their respective priests, for their respective reasons, until Ireland was as much a bloody field of battle as ever. Before the fortune of combat had declared what warrior was likely to be the master,

as was the custom of his office, Pope John XXII. spoke out, and proved that he commanded. He anathematised the Bruce and all his followers ! He blessed King Edward and those who aided him ! Then the odds became against the Bruce truly frightful. Who now had "manliness" enough to brunt the ecclesiastical wrath, even by wishing success to Scotland's hero ? Few. But the *few*, though honest, were scanty assistance to the King of Scots ; so he departed from a land where priestcraft ruled, and misery and degradation, as a necessary progeny, throve. After this abortive struggle a complaint of their many afflictions was laid by the Irish before the Pope, in which they very pointedly accused Adrian IV. as being the *direct cause of all* their calamities. The letter is very long, and may be found, in its entirety, in Carew's *Ecc. His.*

The pretensions of the English to uphold their national or "ethneological doctrine" of indefeasible hereditary right over those who were Irish born, was, about that time, sedulously discountenanced by the Roman Church. Such a system—seldom compatible with her high, general, and peculiar notions—was then particularly distasteful. The people of both countries, as much by her cunning contrivances to that end, as by constant intermarriages and political tampering, soon, therefore, differed, within the pale at least, as little in manner as in religion, although the same laws were not yet for both. This was an obviously great point, and, having secured it, Rome made more rapid strides than ever. So deeply had she imagined this principle to have been inculcated, that, in a fit of "wise weakness," she made an effort to heal one wound of poor stabbed Ireland. The Archbishop of Dublin (Lech), perhaps giving way to very worthy emotions, sought to establish, in 1308, an university in Dublin. He demanded permission from Pope Clement V., because such a very serious undertaking, in its tendencies, could not be set on foot without "his holiness's" sanction. The design, merely embracing theological

and legislative study, was not opposed. But Lech was snatched away by death's unsparing arm before his commendable purpose was perfected. The project did not, nevertheless pass untried. In 1320, an academy, on the principle he suggested, was built, and produced merely nominal results. So trifling, indeed, were the fruits, that its existence, soon after its establishment, was not known beyond the city, and there few took advantage of it. Ware is inclined to think it was a ruin before Henry VIII.'s time. About the year 1320, an order of mendicant or begging friars, "shameless and daring," started into prominence in this country. They were resolutely opposed by the archbishops, especially those of Armagh, one of whom, Primate Crump, declared, that "they were never instituted by God's inspiration." Poor Crump, like his predecessor Fitzralph, paid for his temerity, by being forced to retract all he said against them. This is an important fact; and such abject recantation of an honest opinion is attributed by the writer of *Religion of the Ancient Irish* to the terrors of the Inquisition. As another consequence both of Romanism and ignorance (one of which is fostered with the other), witches and witchery became lamentably prevalent. Not merely were the peasantry imbrued with the worst and most pernicious theories, but they, in conjunction with the aristocracy, also reduced them to the most odious practice.

The clamor of ecclesiastics at this time was not merely an incessant outcry against women-witches. There were besides some very "troublesome fellows" who openly set at defiance Papal supremacy. Many there were who trampled on the famed statute of Kilkenny, passed in 1367, by which our dear Irish language was first proscribed; and that proscription, with other rash enactments, met with willing abettors in our fallen clergy, who threatened and denounced those that despised its cruelty. Others there were who questioned transubstantiation, and others still who had moral courage enough to doubt and condemn the whole Romish system. All caused

“the Church” considerable annoyance. But these honest *Protestants*, who strove with such legitimate and praiseworthy endeavours to brighten the dark days—to open a much needed REFORMATION—were designated heretics and their “notions” heretical. Stigmatised as such by wicked priests, who were known to be murderers and connivers at murder, they and their “virtuous indignation” were alike consumed to ashes. Ware, in his *Bishops* (p. 533), confirms the fact, that such diabolical proceedings as the burning of “heretics” were usual in the fourteenth century. He relates, amongst other cases, that corporal punishment was inflicted upon some poor person who declined *worshipping the Virgin!* The scandalous animosity, springing from these acts, reflects in its true character the degeneracy of the clergy then polluting a once religious land. The same writer (p. 508) mentions a disgraceful quarrel as having taken place between the Bishop of Limerick and the Archbishop of Cashel. Limerick had committed same “fault” with respect to persecuting heretics, and was summoned by his archbishop, Cashel, to account for it. He met his investigator, and instead of answering the charge, he rushed upon Cashel and having “tore him terribly,” forced him from the city of Limerick—cursed all who received him—excommunicated those who heard him preach—sent his servants occasionally to “way-lay him”—and denounced any one who he imagined liked him. These disgusting abuses frightfully prevailed, as will be seen by a reference to the work quoted from. Indulgences, which even for murder, were often granted to those who helped in the private vengeance or spleen of any prelate, nurtured them! The system made a very choice selection of “creditable” executors of its sanguinary laws!

Nothing of any moment in Irish Church history characterises the earlier part of Richard the Second’s reign, which commenced in 1378. But coming towards its close, the “merest idea” of Wickliffe’s teaching was imparted to those in Ireland who doubted Romanism. That great reformer’s followers, known as *Lollards*, grew

so formidable in England, that Richard, who was "righting affairs" in Ireland, was called over to check the precursor of the lightsome reformation which soon after burst upon the gloom. He left Roger Mortimer as his deputy in Ireland, which still remained in an unsettled and lawless state. But whatever stray seed of Reformation time or chance had cast hither from the pious Wickliffites, as an old historian says, "it took no root, from domestic discord," and prelatie and priestly persecution, which yet maintained an awful predominance.

Henry IV.'s accession to the English throne did not in the least affect the prosperity of Ireland, though it did that of Romanism. His son succeeded, under the title of Henry V., in 1413, and to him France was the all-absorbing attraction.

Ormond was Irish deputy in this reign, when the people were *obliged* to petition—that honest, faithful, unquarrelsome ministers may be appointed to the churches! This feeble blow contains an efficient exposition of the grossness with which the clergy had degraded their office. Disputes, and fierce ones, arose about this time between lay and clerical representatives of both nations. The ecclesiastical agitators excited the people, whom they respectively ruled, to the highest pitch of enmity. Nation arose against nation. Prejudices were then established which are not yet wholly abolished. We have an amusing instance of how those jealousies extended and flourished, in the accusation made by the Bishop of Kilmore, an Englishman, against the Archbishop of Cashel, an Irishman. The former swore that the latter forged for his own use the "great seal;" that he was guilty of peculation; and that he abstracted from the finger of the Virgin's statue a gold ring, which he gave to a lady with whom he had been "gallantly intimate." In short, continued the complainant, "he is an enemy to England, and confers his benefices alone on Irishmen." In this exclamation the cause of the exposure escaped. It does not invalidate the complaint, which at least, so far as lady-worship is concerned, is very strongly indicative of the class which

professes celibacy at present, and speaks significantly against the *deformer's* morality.

Henry VI. became King in 1422, and devoted himself to dispense, with some show of justice, "Englishism" to the poor poverty-laden, priest-persecuted, and superstition-stricken Irish. Under him, and while Lord Waterford was Governor, it was enacted, at the Parliament held in Trim, that men who did not wish to be looked upon and treated as the "Irish enemy," were to shave off their beards, and suffer, at all events, none to remain upon the upper lip. This custom English and Irish priests yet rigidly adhere to. Another Parliament assembled under the Earl Worcester, in 1467, at Dublin. Then an Act was passed which distinctly expressed in what manner the English monarchs claimed dominion over Ireland. In the Act is this very significative sentence :—

"The Holy Father, Adrian IV., Pope of Rome, who was possessed of the seigniorship of Ireland in right of his Church, did, for a certain rent, alienate the same to the King of England and his heirs for ever!!"

Edward IV., Edward V., and Richard III., filled, successively, the British throne, without witnessing any singular event, and no reliable or remarkable improvement as having occurred in Ireland's Church. Several chief governors passed off the scene of temporary dominion, and yet Romanism held undisputed sway; and superstition, hand in hand with misery, stalked the land, undeprived of mastery, but growing more bitter in its fiendish tortures and heartless exactions.

About the year 1486, the Irish Romanists who favoured Simnel, the personifier of Warwick, crowned their chosen impostor solemnly in Mary's Abbey Church, with a diadem borrowed from the "Virgin's head," and called him Edward VI. In this, and many other instances, as Leland shows (ii. 39), the Irish prelates, of course unreflectingly, revolted against papal supremacy, and often, for a time, set all such laws at nought. Simnel's kingship was, however, of very brief existence. On marching into England with a considerable force, he was

encountered and defeated by the real monarch, Henry VII. The mock king, some say, was sent as a fitting scullion for Henry's royal kitchen! others say that he went to the "block" immediately.

There was much in the deceptive tranquillity which seemed after this event to pervade Ireland, that prompted Henry to gratify the rage created by the late rebellion. A few of the bishops had not allied themselves with the Pretender's party, and to them, therefore, he gave orders, through a bull designedly procured, to excommunicate all the rest! Kildare, who was then, and during the rebellion, Governor, was included amongst the cursed, because he not only countenanced but aided the impostor. As it was expected that he would resist the enforcement of the bull, Henry sent a large army with it, under Edgecomb. Kildare soon saw he had best to make terms, and accordingly signified his intention of doing so. When oaths for this purpose had been duly drawn up by Edgecomb, a very strange but natural demand was made by Kildare, which merits prominent notice.

The custom of swearing "great folk" then was over the consecrated host, or Christ! In the consecration of this, as in the official performance of any other such act by a Romish minister, it was then well understood, as it has been since more particularly defined, that the *intention* of the officiating minister is absolutely required for the validity of the thing consecrated or act performed. Kildare, comprehending how very convenient this dangerous doctrine would then be, demanded that *his* chaplain might be permitted to consecrate the host. He, as well as his followers, knew how much to their purpose the *intention* of their own chaplain would be! But the other party saw through the scheme, and had "the thing done" by their own chaplain. An old chronicler, supposed to be Edgecomb, describes what followed, thus:—

"This done, the sayd earle was shriven and assoilzied; and there, in presence of many persons, the sayd earle, holding his right hand over the holy host, made his solemn oath of allegiance

unto our sovereign lord King Henry VII., in such form as was before devised; and in likewise the bishops and lords made like oathes; and that done, and the mass ended, the sayd earl, with the sayd Richard, bishoppes, and lordes, went into the church, and in the choir thereof the Archbishop of Dublin began 'Te Deum,' the organs sung it up solemnly, and all the bells in the church range."

Another struggle for royalty, and an opportunity for rebellion, formed in Ireland, upon the arrival of Perkin Warbeck at Cork, in 1493. Many flocked to his standard, eager for nothing but war and plunder. It terminated in furthering the march of Ireland's misery.

Henry, finding the Irish so addicted to rebellion, commanded Walter, Archbishop of Dublin, to come and explain to him why they were so. He wondered, and naturally wished to be informed, why so fair and favoured a soil, to all appearance, was productive of almost nothing else but riot. The extremely innocent and thoughtless bishop did not express a clear opinion, but intimated it as his belief, that the Celtic was an unmanageable race, and that their bad customs were irremediable! He had no notion, poor soul, how mighty, free, and learned was that "turbulent, irritable, and ungovernable people," before his "spiritual" lord and master had taken pains to provide the conquered land with a religion, framed in that system oppressive to soul and body, which Ireland then staggered under, and since groans beneath. Romanism was the *cause*, good bishop! No one can doubt it who reads its progress in the land, any more than he can what was the *effect* which history witnesseth! One is as palpable as the other.

Under the administration of Poynings, the clergy were beginning to lose their hold of the people's mind. Superstition was a "wee bit" checked, and the desperation to which priests had too oft driven them may account for this change on the part of the Irish. Denunciations "and such things" became disregarded, as they grew too common. Church burning, and like outrages, were not of unfrequent occurrence; in these deeds the nobles of the land often signalised themselves, and as

often with an intent more barbarous than the act. Witness Kildare's stern admission, when tried before the King. Among other accusations he was taunted with having burned to the ground the church of Cashel. To this charge the earl defiantly replied—"I did set fire to that church, for I *thought that the bishop had been in it.*" And in Henry the Eighth's reign, when "Silken Thomas Fitzgerald," with more inconsiderateness than power, cast himself into the depth of an angry rebellion, his rage and his vengeance were heaped, with indiscriminate heartiness, on the peasant, priest, or prelate. Every reader of Irish lore recollects how vainly, from this haughty young lord, the aged Alan, Archbishop of Dublin, implored mercy as a "Christian and churchman." "Away with the churl," was the heartless reply to the venerable priest's earnest supplication for pity. Those who heard the order "bore him away like wolves, and tore him to pieces!" This was cruel—very; but it throws a significant light upon the manner in which the Romish prelates—yea, prelates—a brief space before the Reformation, were regarded and treated. They had exhausted the respect and veneration of the country which they had ruined!

Three long, dark, and dismal centuries have passed away since Ireland first began to depart from the faith. Her honest ardour has expired; her peevishness and irritability increased. Her degradation has become utter; her nationality perished. Her early literary attainments are not known by her degenerate sons; her condition is abject; her poverty extreme. Her boasted honour and honesty are trampled under foot. She has grown thoroughly rapacious and violent—energetic in malignity, and debased in morals. She has lost Christianity and national might; and gained superstition and national misery. In short, Ireland was become, as history laments, a speck of land as cursed and despicable as there existed at the time of which I write.

Ireland! No wonder that one would ask with incredulous amazement—Is this the "Isle of Saints?" This the land whose sons adorned religion, arts, and sciences?

This the "asylum of piety" and learning? This the missionary school for Europe? This the—in short, is it the Ireland of which the first chapter treats? Alas! alas! it is. Much changed—much. Oh! how faintly that word expresses the depth of the change. This—even this island, now so despotically leprosid, so tainted, so wrapt in the "mystery of iniquity," so steeped in slavery, crime, and error, is that Ireland. Need any one be told how so startling and strange a metamorphosis came to pass? Is there a necessity to point to the *leaven* which, with such unsparing perfection, leavened the whole heap? I trow not. The instrumentality in effecting this mighty disaster—a nation's ruin—if the preceding pages have been carefully perused, must be understood.

When our country failed, by a combination of mis-haps, to resist "the teaching of fanaticism, error and superstition," she should be prepared for the reception, as Dr. Cumming observes, "of what always feeds and flourishes on these—despotism and license—just in the ratio of the domination of Romish power."

CHAPTER IV.

(FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE MIDDLE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.)

LIGHT STREAKS THE GLOOM—PAPAL SWAY SCOURGED
—REFORMATION YET RESTRAINED.

Amend your ways and your doings, and *obey the voice of the Lord your God*, and He will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.—*Jer.* xxvi. 13. Babylon is become the habitation of devils. Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Rejoice over her thou heaven, for God hath avenged you on her.—*Rev.* xviii.

FROM Henry the Second's to Henry the Eighth's accession to the British Crown, embracing a period little short of four centuries, the *deformation* of Ireland's religion had been well and hurriedly executed. While our national religion and dignity were being subverted, our national suffering was tragic. Without one remedy, these disasters, great and cruel, would be incurable. Reformation—the antidote to that poison, whose introduction amongst us created our evils—if duly applied, would again make the Irish Church clear from its depths, and the Irish nation free and fortunate. That it might, through Providence, come to our aid, was at this time not improbable. Hence those who held pure Christianity even yet in Ireland, and had escaped the most ruthless persecution, exulted in thinking their country's case not hopeless.

The great Reformer, Luther, disturbed the stagnancy of Rome's corruptions when Henry VIII. ruled Britain. His denunciations of the Papacy's grasping and remorseless spiritual despotism—his vigorous expositions of the entire system, fell upon Europe as a ter-

rific thunderbolt, whose echo resounded in the remotest regions. This explosion, which seemed likely to shatter her to pieces, amazed Rome. But the happy indication it gave of ridding God's vineyard of insects and vipers was hailed with acclamation by thousands. I would fain hope that the first flash caused a rapturous swell in many Irish hearts. And, indeed, if Ireland could peep from her almost sepulchral darkness, or lift her then wofully decrepid head from spiritual drowsiness, she would glow with sacred fervour at the bright prospect of recovering her "golden age." She could find in the Reformer's arguments the stainless principles of her lost religion, but she had lost with it the real aptitude for good and gracious acquirements. To her miseries she had grown accustomed; and the cause not having been defined, she was slow in recovering.

Our narrative has brought us now to the era of the first reformation in Ireland and England. So worn had become the pious frauds of Rome, that when the Reformation star shone, the Irish were not indisposed to accept its light, even though they might not comprehend its intrinsic brilliancy. Cardinal Wolsey's saleable dispensations met with few purchasers in 1528 among the Irish, as his market-man, Archbishop Allan, mournfully declares! And for whatever length or to whatever extent her synodical decrees were heeded before, we find that about the same period the real Irish did not obey Rome's matrimonial rules, but adopted the early custom, and positively "questioned" Wolsey's authority. These facts are convincingly adduced by Cox (p. 210). But though ripening, the Irish, or the English in Ireland, were not yet thoroughly mature for a complete renunciation of Rome. My readers, doubtless, are all intimate with the dispute between Henry VIII. and Pope Clement VII., which led England's monarch to investigate the rightfulness of the Pope's pretensions to supremacy. In considering them he was forced to note some points of doctrine which induced him to favour Luther, whose principles he, however, *never* practised. His first step was to deprive the Pope by a Parliamentary Act, in 1533,

of the pecuniary emoluments he derived from England. The next was to propose to his clergy assembled in the following year "what greater jurisdiction, if any, than other foreign bishops had the Pope over England, according to the Word of God?" We are told that Bishop Fisher alone stood forth asserting the affirmative. All England's clergy, except this man, declared with one voice that he had *none*, by such right. Upon this decision papal power and authority in England perished. In a few months independence of Rome became established in Britain. The King saw that it was a fitting opportunity to restore Ireland to her freedom from the Pope's exacting grasp. This country was even far more worried than England, but her clergy, by some unintelligible delusion, were more subject to the alien influence.

Poor Archbishop Allan having been murdered by his refractory "child," Silken Thomas, left the Archbishopric of Dublin vacant in 1534. Henry took advantage of that event, and appointed a man to succeed Allan fully qualified for the office; and so trained as to be a safe and efficient upholder of the King's supremacy when the crisis arrived. At that time Cromer was Primate of Ireland, and one of the most attached adherents of Rome. He resisted with vigour the King's claim to be supreme governor in his own realms, and ranked not a few followers in his determined opposition. His subordinates, for the most part, like the generality of priests then in Ireland, were illiterate—a fact universally admitted—and as passion, or the interests of what they so long regarded as the "infallible Church," directed, they acted. Of course, when the teachers had nothing better than an education of this sort to impart to their flocks, in such troublous times, Irishmen must have unavoidably partaken of the ignorance, be it ever so pernicious. They were, therefore, the more tractable in evil and under the lash of their superstitious taskmasters.

The chosen man of Henry to struggle with the depraved capacity of a fallen people was George Brown, an Augustinian friar. Brown first attracted attention by his unceasing exertions to preach down saint-wor-

ship, and to exalt the amplitude of Christ's atonement. Ware, in his *Life of Brown*, proves him to be a man of eminence and honesty, a man of piety and learning, one wisely selected for the high office named. He received doctor's degrees both at Oxford and Cambridge. In the March of 1534 he was consecrated after the custom of Rome, and sent by Henry to the Bishopric of Dublin.

Upon Brown's arrival in Dublin, a commission was instituted for the purpose of setting to rights the King's supremacy against that of the Pope. Opposing this, such priests as were yet zealots of Rome, marshalled, under Primate Cromer, their passive flocks, and armed them with popular frenzy. The other portion, who either stood apart from the contest, or, viewing it short-sightedly, merely assented to a suppression of papalism, were indifferent about either monarch. Long rooted in the Irish heart a secret distrust of English promises lived, wherefore they were never likely to meet, without great hesitation, an Irish welcome, even though they were conceived with hearty sincerity. And in truth the feeling was not nursed unmutually—it was quite reciprocal. The anxiety to conciliate, which England, since the invasion, exhibited towards Ireland, as reduced to practice, attested little goodly in motive. The Irish invariably found, that in conceding much favours or accepting such promises, they were enacting treason to themselves and country. They were now, besides, from a variety of circumstances, as I have elsewhere shown, unable to arrive at the true meaning of any species of reaction. Cromer's exhortations to resist the King's supremacy, uttered with prelatic enthusiasm, therefore, in proving successful did no more than might have been anticipated. Brown's position, from similar causes, became trying and dangerous. Men studiously exasperated by the inciting harangues of a powerful and, by system, treacherous priesthood, might, as they have always done, stamp their undigested abhorrence of the thing proposed with the blood of its promoter. Agitation even then derived its violence and ruffianism from the

same class of hot-headed and illiterate "exclusionists," which has in modern time, to be sure, with a more decent polish, sundered the dearest ties, to elevate its notions and interests. Brown foresaw that to continue, without a legislative support, his present course would be highly imprudent under the existing disposition of the people to obey unquestioned those who were for Rome. To this end he addressed a letter to Lord Cromwell, the disgraced Wolsey's successor. Having ascribed the angry zeal of his opponents to a "thorough ignorance of spiritual good," he remarked that "they were utter strangers to the language in which mass was said."

In accordance with Brown's suggestions, a parliament was held at Dublin, in 1536, not, as Mant has it, in 1537. Lord Leonard Grey was at this time Chief Governor of Ireland. Priestly opinion yet unabatedly and recklessly encouraged agitation against any attempt to annul papal sway. The tumult was not durable or irresistible, but giddy, malicious, and noisy. Parliament met. Papal supremacy—"a thing," said the legislators, "we abhor and detest"—was *renounced*. The great temptations—*pensions*, *Peter's pence*, and *dispensations*—which made Rome's pretensions to power particularly harassing, were wrested from her "horse-leech" grasp, and crushed. Those houses, audaciously called religious, which always paralyzed learning, and choked virtue, were "inquired into," and abolished. The King was proclaimed supreme head of the church *in temporalities*, and Christ's high dignity, as the "head and front," the real "chief corner stone," fully recognised, by stripping of his arrogant assumption the blasphemous pretender to, and usurper of, this lofty dignity. Twelve of those abodes of "mock piety and real infamy," as a converted priest designates nunneries and monkeries, were levelled by one sweeping act, and their rich endowments unwisely turned into the state coffers. Perhaps the least judicious enactment of all passed then, was that forbidding the presentation of benefices to *Irish-speaking* men. With an inconsiderate

and crude desire to enforce, if not encourage, the learning of the English language, this law, and one establishing English schools in every parish, was passed. The lamentable impolity of such "opening enactments" as regards ecclesiastical matters, and as regards the Reformation's complete success, subsequent events, detailed in their proper places, clearly set forth.

The excitement and dissent which pervaded the sacerdotal ranks upon Henry's claim, although it might have at first embroiled, in its heat, the nobles and respectable laymen of the land, did not prove continuous. I find that soon after the "respective pretensions" of King and Pope were investigated, an acknowledgment of the superiority of the King's claims was accorded, in a manner little short of unanimity. Indeed, it was by many degrees far more unanimous than the *consent* ever given by the "fathers" to any of Rome's doctrines. One of the most eager of Ireland's princes to cast off papal allegiance was the celebrated Desmond. Not satisfied with a mere lip expression of his honest protestation, he affirmed it in bonded characters on the 16th of January, 1540. In this "indenture," as Dean Murray properly names it, he—

"Utterly denied and promised to forsake the usurped primacy and authority of the Bishop of Rome, and engaged to resist and repress the same; and all that should by any means uphold or maintain it."

Several other equally influential princes, sick of Rome's fascinating yet torturing enthrallment, espoused the King's cause, and promised, as promptly, unreservedly, and resolutely as Desmond, to "cast off" and eradicate Papal power and authority from Ireland. Nor were these manifestations confined solely to the nobility. Warned by the repeated perfidies of Rome, *the people* shrewdly suspected what was meant by the strenuous exertions of their tirelessly agitating clergy. They saw for whose good they were principally designed. And this time they almost *en masse* chose rather to be "poorly independent," than "servile slaves." Roman Catholic writers,

like O'Connor, Burke, and Geoghegan, while *admitting* such a reception of Henry's power, attempt to explain away its distinctness, as given to him, because he was antagonistic to the Pope, by insinuating the most childish reasons. Leland (vol. ii.) grants that loyal enthusiasm grew "outrageous," and "papal respect" declined. Any of the ingredients which formed such a popular acceptance of a monarch, who had been, by the bull of Pope Paul III. (quoted in Burnet's *His.* v. i.) pronounced as "eternally damned," must positively be little akin to dread or veneration for Rome. But the wily dignitaries and agents of Rome could not quietly see their power, "pomp, and pageantry" suppressed, without a mortal contest—a dying struggle. Every bait that was deemed takeable was held out to allure "the apostates." Every prejudice that could further feed vulgar desires; every appellation, curse, and denunciation, in the bestowal of which Rome is inexhaustibly fertile, were had recourse to for the preservation, by fright, of those not "gone." The Reformation was nevertheless, really, at this time but merely threatened. Whatever success towards its introduction was achieved, may be set down as the overthrow of papal power, not doctrines. They, unless by Brown and his adherents, were not yet avowedly, openly, and unremittingly exposed.

One "sober stretch," to arrest the coming blow to Romanism, was the circulation of fabulous predictions to indulge superstitious propensities. Amongst the excesses of this kind was a strange rumour, emanating from the highest Roman authority, that it was prophesied that the Romish Church *should* fall when the Roman Catholic faith was overthrown in Ireland." Had the promulgators of such "convenient foresight" any notion then of Infallibility? It would appear not. The Romish Church is now (in 1852) not far from its total fall in Ireland; and it is, after all, likely that the careless prophet hit unwittingly upon a truth, and that with her fall in Ireland shall her sway be extinguished everywhere. Be it so.

The most insolent and masterly of Rome's attempts to keep her standing in Ireland at this time, was a "vow

of *obedience*," extorted in 1538, from every one to whom priest or bishop had access. A regular circular was *issued*, to be found fully copied in Cox (i. 257), passages of which I annex :—

" I, A. B., &c., . . . shall and will be always obedient, &c. . . . to my holy lord the Pope of Rome, and his successors, in all things as well spiritual as temporal, &c. . . . I count *all acts made, or to be made by heretical powers, of no force, or to be practised by myself or any other son of the Mother Church. I do further declare him or her, father or mother, &c.* . . . and all other nearest and dearest friend or acquaintance, whatsoever, *accursed, &c.* . . . that do or shall obey for time to come, any of the Mother Church's opposers or enemies, &c., of which I have been sworn unto. So God, Blessed Virgin, &c., help," &c.

To comment upon that self-condemnatory "vow" would be superfluous. Such were the weapons then openly—such are the weapons now a little more covertly, and improvedly, used by Rome, to contend with any Reformation. These schemes then merely sufficed to deter a few; the people, as a body, resented, by despising them. Curious enough that here old prejudices, fierce and strong against England, were dissolved by disunion with Rome. So Leland proves (ii. 180).

Archbishop Brown continued his almost unaided and unceasing exertions to tear out the doctrines of the papacy, until the spring of 1538, when war menaced "the invaders of the papal rights." The "famed O'Neill" had by some means conveyed to him a letter from the Archbishop of Metz, which besought the chieftain to rescue his country from "heresy, and restore the Pope's power." O'Neill's heart was much stirred by the blessings and *benefits* expected. He was not unreasonably excited, having much to gain and little to lose. His was a heart to delight in every daring enterprise, and such a selection creditably maintained the cunning of Rome's despot. He mustered for action a numerous body of vassals, whose objects were, on Leland's showing (ii. 176), and as I believe, "plunder and prey." Having been encountered on the plains of Bellahoe, near

Meath, by the troops of Lord Grey, whose valour was gallantly seconded by Sir William Brereton, specially despatched to his aid with an English reinforcement, O'Neill fled from the field, after a most disastrous defeat. So ended the first physical contest to re-impose papal sway in Ireland.

It was during the administration of St. Leger, Grey's successor, in 1541, that Henry assumed, by the sanction of Parliament, instead of "*Lord*," the title of "*King of Ireland*." And then also that Desmond, and others already alluded to, joyously clung to the cause of Henry.

Towards the close of 1538, Brown made a "reforming" visitation through several counties "above the Barrow." This tour is described in the third volume of *State Papers* (part iii.) His sermons were all well attended, and great anxiety seemed to have sprung up to know, for a certainty, what were the errors of Rome about which he spoke. Brown greatly felt the want of knowing the native language. He who condemned the Latin mass, did not blindly believe that a language just as strange to the Irish would do better. He had, however, a painstaking interpreter in Nangle, Bishop of Clonfert, a man, in the words of Brown, as quoted by Mant (p. 153), "not only well learned, but also right honest, and who undoubtedly will set as well the *Word* of God as our prince's causes, in the Irish tongue." Nangle was too much a scriptural man to be endured by the Pope, so he was obliged to put up with a papal rival for his see, who was countenanced by the deputy, St. Leger. The archbishop made, in the course of his several visits, a "mighty share" of converts, at least in thorough allegiance to the King. The progress of this movement may be collected from the following extract of a letter, addressed by the archbishop and his companions to Chancellor Cromwell, in the February of 1539:—

"At Clonmel was with us two archbishops and eight bishops, in whose presence my Lord of Dublin preached, in advancing the King's supremacy and the extinguishment of the Busshop of Rome. And his sermon fynished, all the busshops in all thoppen audience, toke the oathe mencioned in the actes of parliament,

bothe touching the Kinge's succession and supremacy, before me, the Kinge's Chauncellor and divers others there present, ded the lilke."

Brown's pious labours were too frequently impeded by the Lord Deputy and others, to be immediately, if at all, successful. That English Viceroy was stigmatised by Mant (p. 148), as "a favourer and practiser of image worship, and generally well-disposed to popish corruptions." Little wonder, then, that poor Brown, brooding over the consequences of having at a country's helm an encourager of "rank traidetors," a "debilitator of God's word," wrote in this mournful strain to Cromwell, as I find in Mant (p. 149), speaking rebukingly of the Lord Deputy's "hindrances and tendencies :"—

"So doth his Lordship aid me in my prince's causes. I think the simplest holy-water clerk is better esteemed than I am, &c. When that I was at the worst, I was in better case than I am now. What with my Lord Deputy, the Bishop of Meath, and the pecuniose Prior of Kilmainham," &c.

But the Deputy's royal master having now secured intact his royal privileges, paid little regard to the principles of reformation. The fickleness and perfidy of the yet Romish Henry produced their natural consequences.

A little reform was, in sooth, extended to the "tossed, splitting, and corrupt ecclesiastical *laws*." Bishops were *permitted*—yes, "*allowed* to execute their jurisdiction; and that laymen and boys should not be admitted to ecclesiastical preferment." Here, however, improvement ceased, so far as government provided or heeded. Henry never for a moment entertained a desire to "upset or pull down" the false doctrines of Rome. His heart was chiefly bent on cruel and corrupt self-aggrandisement. If other proof were needed of his portentous obstinacy to reform, sufficient can be deduced from his appointing the tried friend of Rome, Dowdall, to the see of Armagh, vacant in 1543, by Cromer's death.

Dowdall, though everything "his holiness" could desire, being obliged to dispense with the papal confirmation of his appointment, and also, with being conse-

crated exactly after the Romish custom, as the *State Papers* show (vol. iii.), was not recognised by Rome. Waucop, a Scotchman, was, consequently, nominated by the Pope, but, in turn, *never* recognised by the Irish people. This fact, Dr. O'Connor, and others, satisfactorily and conclusively concede. When the Council of Trent assembled, the titular Bishop of Armagh, Robert Waucop was present, assuming the style of Ireland's *real* representative, though neither the bishops, clergy, nor laity reckoned him an Irish prelate, and scoffed at his pretensions to the primacy. This papal nominee to an already occupied see, has the equivocal distinction of first introducing "Jesuits" into Ireland. Perhaps, in the posture of affairs, they accompanied him to direct his suspicious and doubly dark path (for, Dr. Phelan says, "he was blind from his birth"), and to give a sharper edge to his predilections. But they could not exonerate him from the charge of usurpation, which the Irish nation, in the silent spurning of his authority, cast upon him. Such was the temper then prevailing—such the matter to feed it.

But to return. However ill-disposed or unsuited to the office of reformer Brown's monarch was, he himself, in despite of very many adversities, smoothed away much rubbish from before the coming movement. Image-worship was successfully decried, at least so far as his jurisdiction extended, and the voices of some other bishops reached. The Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and God's Commands, were divested of their Latin garb, and given in a comprehended dialect to the people. Several other minor improvements were made, all of which tended to remove, at least, the crust of the enormous pile of filth which covered the early Irish Church. The Reformation had not yet, however, properly dawned in Ireland. Those men spoken of as removers of some abuses, still entrusted the safety of their souls, in a certain manner, to the Romish system; their efforts were for its more healthy continuance, without considering it necessary to render extinct its pernicious principles. They meant to patch up a rotten model without reform-

ing it. Were they encouraged, however, in their inquiries into the cause and remedy, instead of being, as they were, disheartened or slighted, no doubt they would find just reason to impute our national humiliation to a want of *thorough* reform. And acting upon that discovery, they would *destroy*, as the only saveable course. But Henry, in the words of Mant (p. 183)—

“When he relieved the Church from the impediment of the monastic institutions, forbore to provide thereby for the religious education of her people, as well as to bestow upon her any secular benefit, and left her incapacitated for necessary activity, and beset by difficulties.”

There was a mixed and real discontent with present practices and principles, but as yet no fixity of purpose. The Irish bishops, though leaning towards reform, dreaded to begin, and were still, therefore, clasped, however unwillingly, within Rome's arms. The papal standing was not dislodged, and her long accumulating profanities and ignorances still lay heaped upon the fire of our ancient religion—striving hard, but unable to extinguish its vitality. Has the reader borne in mind St. Patrick's prophecy? It has proved faithful so far as we have gone. We have, I apprehend, just passed the period represented by “a few coals reduced to ashes, still unextinguished, although hidden.” We are about to approach that time when these coals rekindled, and the fire, as the saint's biographer, Jocelyne, writes, “grew *brighter and stronger*, till it appeared to restore Ireland to its first fiery condition.”

After Henry the Eighth's death (in the Romish persuasion) which occurred one dark morning in the January of 1547, his son Edward became King, at the tender age of ten years, under the protectorate of the Duke of Somerset. St. Leger was again appointed Irish Deputy, by Edward, because it was believed he encouraged Reformation views. The first favourable opportunity of extending the cause of Christian Reform to Ireland, was eagerly grasped at by Edward. Unlike his father, he filled up each successive bishopric, as its occupant dropped off, with a man of known attachment to the

Reformation, and of decided hostility to error. Before three years, according to Mant (i. 191), five sees were thus in the possession of independent Reformers and sincere Christians. But the inferior clergy, who were friends to the good old cause, swayed by enthusiasm, carried their exertions to imprudent lengths. Bigotry soon stained their lily colours, and this necessarily begat prejudice and hate. Rome's intriguers, taking a strong hold of the discreditable exhibitions of angry disputants or pious demolishers, who left many an old shrine "hideous monuments of sacrilege," held the movement in the greatest check. In the attitude of friends and consolers, the Romish priests disaffected the Irish mind against the preachers of Reformation, whose position became particularly hazardous. Scruples, if they did start up, were banished, and calumny came in to heighten their portraiture of the "pillagers." Another serious detriment to the cause was the ignorance of God's Word displayed by its friends among the Irish-speaking priests; and, amongst the English, no acquaintance with the Irish language, to tell what they knew so as to be understood. Without preaching little could be effected; and "as for preaching," wrote Cusack (Mant, p. 222), a little afterwards Chancellor of Ireland, "we have none, which is our lack, without which the ignorant can have no knowledge, and which were very needful to be redressed." This was a mournful state of things. Ireland was ripe, but few reapers who understood the peculiar manner of applying the sickle, were to be had. The Irish priests who professed the principles of the Reformation, had no Bible from which to instruct their flocks. Others could not use it, had they it. The consequence was advantageous to Rome.

Affairs were thus, when the liturgy, *translated* into English, in 1551, was, by royal edict, introduced into Ireland. An assembly of the prelates and clergy was holden, directly on the Viceroy's reception of the order. Dowdall, of whom I have already spoken, with a few suffragan bishops, hastily and rashly resisted the acceptance of the English liturgy, and, in doing so, expended

much time and talk upon his fidelity to Rome. He felt his dignity insulted, that the frequenters of his house of worship should understand the language in which he spoke! "What," he indignantly inquired, "shall every illiterate fellow read mass?" "No," replied the deputy, "your grace is mistaken; for we have too many illiterate priests amongst us already, who neither can pronounce the Latin, nor know what it means, any more than the common people; but when the people hear the liturgy in English, they and the priest will then understand what they pray for." Dowdall's uprightly Romish retort, meant "*beware of the clergy's curse!*" All the other "moderate bishops," as Ware terms them (*Bishops*, 350), adhered to Archbishop Browne in receiving the liturgy, recollecting Paul's character of a barbarian and barbarians in Church (1 Cor. i. 11). On the following Easter-day, in Christ's Church Cathedral—before deputy, bishops, magistrates, and clergy—divine worship was celebrated according to the English liturgy. Upon this memorable occasion, Mant (i. 199) informs us Archbishop Browne delivered an able discourse, from the very appropriate text "*Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy law.*"—(Ps. cxix. 18.)

The movement was now extending, though not yet formally or generally established. Edward most wisely ordered that the worship of God should be propagated in the *Irish* and English tongues, where necessary or practicable. We have, unhappily, too much reason to know, that this order, so far as it concerned the Irish tongue, was neglected.

About that time an edition of the Book of Common Prayer was, however, printed in Dublin, being, I believe, the first book ever printed in Ireland. Crofts, the viceregal successor to St. Leger—who was recalled for his lukewarmness to the cause, in 1551—on his arrival sought to conciliate the discomfited Dowdall, who had betaken himself, in apparent affliction, to St. Mary's Abbey. With this view the deputy obtained a conference with the moody prelate, and a long controversial colloquy, in his presence, between Dowdall and the Bishop of Meath en-

sued. It ended in nothing! the primate saying, "All was in vain when two parties so contrary met." The precedence of the two sees, Dublin and Armagh, was then, a second time, settled; and, to Dowdall's mortification, Armagh was again deprived of the "loftier privileges," which were transferred to Browne's see of Dublin by an Act passed in the October of 1551. The morose and haughty Dowdall could not brook such a disgrace, as it did not come from the Pope, so he "threw up" his see, and fled the country. Turner, a man described by Cranmer as "one that longed for nothing, thirsted for nothing, dreamed of nothing, save Christ Jesus," was most judiciously selected as his successor. He, however, refused to accept the office, on the sufficient grounds that he "must preach to the walls and stalls, as the people understood no English." Goodacre, who had no such objection, was, therefore, consecrated in Christ's Church, in the February of 1553, and then, too, was the illustrious and zealous Bale set apart for the bishopric of Ossory. At these consecrations "without tumult, save amongst the priests," the reformed ordination service, like that of Patrick's, years since proscribed, was, as Burnet and Mant agree (i. 220), used in Ireland.

The new Bishop of Ossory—who so energetically exposed Romanism in Henry the Eighth's reign, that he was twice cast within the prison's gloom—on his appointment to his Irish see, went forward in the holy labour, with the old zeal and Christian fortitude increased. He began instantly to set at rights the re-establishment of pure Christianity, and to strip it of all "prodigious howlings and patterings" for the dead; "bowings and beckings" for the Lord's table, and the thousand other "sorrowful sorceries" that existed, which he knew to be without Scriptural warranty or meaning. His "manner of sermon" is thus given, on his own authority, by Mant (p. 223):—

"I earnestly exhorted the people to repentance for sin, and required them to give credit to the Gospel of salvation; to acknowledge and believe that there was but one God; and

Him *alone*, without any other, *sincerely* to worship; to confess one Christ for an only Saviour and Redeemer, and to trust in none other man's prayers, merits, nor yet deservings, but in his alone for salvation. I treated at large both of the heavenly and political state of the Christian Church; and helper I found none amongst my prebendaries and clergy, but *adversaries* a great many."

But the untimely death of Edward, and the accession of Mary, in 1553, snapped all the present efforts and exertions for the restoration of pure Christianity, and dismayed the heartiest champion of the movement. Edward's reign was, unhappily, too brief to be productive of much real benefit to the Reformation in this country. The principles of that sacred cause were, however, budding when he was taken to God.

I mean to pass over the butcheries and persecutions which so crimsonly stained the miserable reign of Mary. Indeed, persecution in Ireland was not, from combined causes so lamentably frequent or ferocious as in England, therefore I shall have less occasion to advert to the brutal occurrences of that period. I cannot, however, omit mentioning that a noble Reformer, whose name is already introduced in this volume (Bale), was one of her first Irish victims. He was not frightened into silence on her accession, and suffered the penalty of his undeviating constancy to the cause of Christ, by being beset with royally hired assassins. He escaped, but only after losing in his defence five faithful followers, brutally cut down by his assailers. He remained, as Mant and Cox inform us, "beyond the seas" until Elizabeth secured safety, in this kingdom, to the Christian preacher.

Queen Mary restored Dowdall to Armagh after Goodacre's death, in 1553, and the see to its former dignity. Every other bishopric which was held by a reforming prelate was rendered vacant by "royal commission," and at once intruded upon by a decided Romanist. These men, with the greatest exultation, acceded to the royal will in re-imposing Papal fetters on the just-escaping land. Mass was said *without price*, for otherwise no one would pay for it! All distinction and favour was

given to Romanists only. The preaching of the reformers was denounced; their good work hard handled and plucked down. A mutilated show of Scripture was made in order to "console the new desires on that head." These were, of course, conveniently garbled texts, and for a Jesuitical purpose. A papal Viceroy named FitzWalter arrived in the May of 1556, with directions to "set forth the honour and dignity of the Pope's holiness;" and as Cox (303), and Mant (242) explain it, to punish, as he may think meet, "heretics, Lollards, and their *damnable* sects, errors, and opinions."

In the June of 1556 a Parliament was convened for the purpose of hearing read a bull of Paul IV., brought hither by Cardinal Pole, which ascribed Ireland's transgression in casting off papal error, to timidity; but that his holiness, in the plenitude of his mercy and power, graciously overlooked this "grievous fault," and now offered a *plenary* indulgence to the whole nation! The Chancellor read, and the assembly heard, the papal document, on bended knees! The representatives of the people became, to all appearance, repentant, and the papal party felt, therefore, satisfied that reconciliation with Rome was effected.

The "scarcity of persecution" in Ireland is attributed, amongst other reasons, by Cox (308) and Mant (250), to a curious occurrence worth recording. Mary, it appears, despatched the Dean of St. Paul's with a commission to Ireland empowering the council to destroy all heretics. The dean, on his way hither with this evil paper, "put up at Chester," and in the jollity of a moment, when the magnitude of his position as Queen's commission-bearer beamed upon him, and that he imagined it would enhance his good treatment at the hotel, he displayed the important document. The good-hearted hostess contrived a very artful means to stay the bloody hand this paper intended to lift, which possibly may fell friends of her own living in Dublin. When the elated priest, full of his position, had retired to an inner room with some other personage, she quietly conveyed the awful message from his travelling-box to her own

pocket, and substituted a pack of cards, with the knave of clubs uppermost. The unsuspecting dean sailed off next day, confident and satisfied. A full council having been specially assembled in Dublin, he consigned his charge to the deputy's hands, to be solemnly read. An intense silence seized the assembly for a moment. The package lost its paper covering, and lo! to the utter astonishment of all, cards with a very significant "trump," instead of a royal commission, were disclosed. The foamingly mad priest returned to perfect his thwarted design and his mistress's purpose; but ere he could again set foot in Ireland, her soul had sped its way before a righteous Judge, and all her royal orders became of non-effect.

Oppressed by a sense of danger, and left to its own discouraging strength, overwhelmed by weighty wrongs, and borne down upon by barbarous enactments, the infant Reformation was quite nigh completely dead when Mary ceased to live. Any vigour—and it was little and doubtful—it had acquired in the land was greatly subdued during her reign.

The mixed political struggles of that era are not of sufficient magnitude to warrant introduction here, and of too distressing a nature to be written of dispassionately. No visibly important improvement had as yet religiously, socially, or morally, manifested itself in our country's papalised habits or miseries. In that gloom, however, there was discernible a portentous spark, which soon kindled so as to encircle the entire kingdom with its brilliant lustre.

CHAPTER V.

(FROM THE YEAR 1559 TO 1603.)

MORN'S DAWN MASTERS DARKNESS—PAPAL SUPREMACY FATALLY SMITTEN—OUR OLDEN CREED AGAIN CONFESSED.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly.—*Joel*, ii. 15. Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without a law; but when they, in their trouble, did turn unto the Lord God and sought him, he was found of them.—*Chron.* xv. 2, 3. Hear ye this, Oh, priests; for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.—*Hosea*, v. 1. The Lord shall inherit his portion, and shall choose Jerusalem again.—*Zech.* ii. 12.

SOON after Elizabeth's succession to the English throne, in the November of 1558, the Irish Church had restored to it the English liturgy. The deputy, Lord Sussex, faithfully executed his monarch's orders, that God's worship "should be set up in Ireland as it was in England." Mary's ecclesiastical rules were revoked and reversed as the occasion required; Protestant grievances were redressed, and papal authority totally abrogated. Ireland, with, indeed, a considerable show of reluctance, had again, by law, established within her the old religion of Patrick and of the ancient Irish. Deserted by learning, and deprived of the necessary records, our poor, short-sighted, and depressed country, it is true, unwillingly at first, acknowledged her olden guardian, returned after so dreary and long an absence.

The historian Strype relates some rather curious devices had recourse to by the papal party to distort the service, and slander the Church now restored—to cramp the exertions for purity, and make a diversion in favour of error. I gather his statements from the

first volume of Mant's *His.* (p. 254).—When, as directed, “the litany was sung in *English*, in Christ's Church, the popish zealots took great offence, reckoning that the use of the ‘Roman Latin Mass’ was in danger of being laid aside.” To avert such a blow at superstition, “a miracle was to be shown in that church the next Sunday,” when all were present. The miracle was this:—During service, from a marble statue of Christ, “blood was seen to run through the crevices of the crown of thorns trickling down the face of the crucifix.” Most of the congregation fell prostrate in “holy amazement.” The miracle was proved a pious fraud, yet few were inclined to consider it a sham, so far did delusion rule them.

Such trickish deceptions, ceaselessly persisted in, generally without detection, doubled the zeal of the utterly superstitious, and stunned the wavering. Whatever influences these practices tended to uphold were soon destined for dissolution. The sentiments conveyed by the promulgation of “God's Word,” after its releasement from a lengthened bondage in Ireland, were necessarily hostile to the sheltering of such cheats. How extensively the sacred volume was at that time being issued may be inferred from the following scrap taken from the “Loftus MS.” in Marsh's library, and testified to by Ware (*Harris*, ii. 254). The writer treats of the year 1559, and says:—“It appears by the account of John Dale, bookseller for the stationers of London, that within two years there were sold in Dublin 7,000 Bibles.” Reflecting for a moment on the prostrate condition, morally and spiritually, of Ireland then, such a number will appear more vast than it otherwise might. A mistake, only corrected within the last century, was doubtless then, as it had been always here, a great impediment to the Reformation's success. Not only were English habits and customs enforced by law, but the English language was required to be universally known. No attempt to give the people God's Word as they could best understand it, was made. Surrounded by wily priests, who knew as little of *that book* as the people, the snatches of Scrip-

tural arguments our countrymen heard were insufficient to supply the great want they felt. This was an evil any thoughtful mind will at once see required an instant remedy; yet not one was then appearing. The evil proportionably grew with the necessity for its removal. Nevertheless Reformation was made, although not so effectively as could be desired, and as might be made if more acceptable means were employed.

I have here the satisfaction of recording, not the details, but the results of a Reformation movement. So well had the cause worked, under Elizabeth's protection, that only *two* bishops among the Irish hierarchy in the Parliament which assembled to annul all Mary's acts and establish the Reformation, were found resisting the movement. The *two* refractory prelates were "the lately appointed" of the Pope, who laboured faithfully in the expiring struggle of his supremacy, Walsh of Meath, and Leverus of Kildare. These two prelatie malcontents were soon after deprived of their sees for non-conformity; "and," wrote the Right Hon. J. Napier, in his reply to Lord Monteagle (p. 52), "the known history of these two does not enlist much sympathy on their behalf." That such was the cause of their deprivation Mant is satisfied, as also that no persecution was induced by their perverseness (i. 276-298); and that they two were the *only* bishops deprived, all agree—the others having duly conformed. Their sees, as well as others which became vacant from different causes, were instantly filled up by "Godly ministers of the Gospel," properly authorised; and, if such were of the highest importance, holding regularly transmitted succession, and transmitting it to their Protestant successors, unimpaired. Thus the adherents of Rome, after the lapse of a few years, became, in Ireland, comparatively insignificant. Prelates, priests, and people had at length cast off the gross garb which cumbered the land and concealed the crystal doctrines of their forefathers, which they at length recognised and enjoyed.

Perhaps I had better sanction the appearance of some most respectable "witnesses" in support of this

gratifying fact. I may take a few at random, for very many exist, between whom it is not easy to choose, all being alike decisive and worthy :—Carte assures us that the “bishops complied with the Reformation, and that the Roman Catholics *in general* resorted to the parish churches in which the English service was read, until the end of Queen Elizabeth’s reign.” The Roman Catholic Bishop Barrington is not a whit behind the most Protestant witness. Hear him, as quoted by Dean Murray :—

“For some time the great body of the Roman Catholic clergy conformed exteriorly to the law. It was afterwards more than once publicly declared by Sir Edward Coke, when Attorney-General, which the Queen herself confirmed in a letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, that for the first two years of her reign the Roman Catholics, without doubt or scruple, repaired to the parish churches. The assertion is true, if not too generally applied. ‘I deny not,’ says Father J. Parsons, in reply to Coke, ‘but that many throughout the realm, though otherwise Catholics in heart, as most of them were, did, at that time, and after, as also now (A.D. 1606), either from fear or lack of better instructions, or both, repair to Protestant churches.’”

Leland, too, comes boldly forward to prove that “all the Romish communion resorted to the established churches.” I shall permit the good Dean Murray, of Ardagh, to follow, saying :—

“The fact of the Reformation having been generally received in Ireland by the nobles, priests, and people, seems to be as fully proved as any other in history. The bishops and priests of the Church of Rome all outwardly conformed; they freely substituted the Common Prayer for the Missal, and English service for a Latin mass. They could then discover no heresy in our Book of Prayer, and nothing damnable in our public service.”

Dr. Phelan also confirms the *fact* that “the majority of the prelates, *leading* or following the popular opinion, retained their sees, and exercised their functions according to the reformed ritual.” In short, the result of the first Irish Reformation was, beyond dispute, general in its extent, if not complete in its organisation so as

to maintain permanent success. Because of anomalies or imperfections in the existing ecclesiastical laws, as well as the carelessness exhibited in the selection of ministers for cures by those who had the privilege of conferring them, this state of things was not likely to continue. To make the work, now favourably progressing, durable and irreducible required some better management than appears from the following extracts to have prevailed. Sidney, lord deputy, writing in 1576 to the Queen, as Mant informs us, says, speaking of the parishes in the extensive diocese of Meath:—

“There is no parson or vicar resident upon any of them, and a very simple or sorry curate for the most part appointed to serve them; among which number of curates only eighteen were found able to speak English, the rest Irish priests, or rather Irish rogues, having very little Latin, less learning or civility. In many places the very walls of the churches down: very few chancels covered, windows and doors ruined or spoiled. . . . But your Majesty may believe it, that upon the face of the earth, where Christ is professed, there is not a Church in so miserable a case—the misery of which consisteth in these three particulars: the ruin of the very temples themselves; the want of good ministers to serve in them when they shall be re-edified; competent living for the ministers, being well chosen.”

It is added:—

“If some good men were provided, that they might use the prayer, service, and administration of sacraments set out and established by this act, in *such language as they mought best understand*, the due honour of God should be thereby much advanced; and for that also, that the same may not be in their *native language*, as well for difficulty to get it printed, as that few in the whole realm can read the Irish letters.”

“The English government,” says Bishop Mant (p. 330), “probably took different views from those expressed in the foregoing letter; at least, they do not appear to have acted upon them; and the problem, of infinite importance as they must have deemed it, still waited its solution.”

Mant further declares that—

“During the three administrations which had intervened since the death of Sir William Drury, in 1579, no efforts are recorded to have been made for the remedy of the crying necessities of the Church, notwithstanding the office of Lord Justice had been filled

by the Archbishop of Dublin, during about a year and a-half of that interval."

Here was a gigantic, but unremedied evil. To estimate its desperate consequences, we have but to read the subsequent history of our Church.

This most culpable negligence, though a chief, was not the only impediment to the *firming* of the work. Rome profited, in her peculiar manner, by the irregularities. The notorious Shane O'Neill at this time helped to harass the country already confused by other disturbances. He worried the people and teased the authorities. Sacrilegious burnings caused him rejoicings; murder and devastations against the English and Reformers were his great "by-thoughts." In him may be seen a specimen of the rebels blessed by the Pope to destroy true religion. He was excommunicated by the clergy (not the papal), but his irreducible villany lasted fresh to the hour of his assassination. The Desmonds, too, pretending to abate domestic hostility, brewed much Irish blood. While it was flowing copiously, the crafty Pope took advantage again of Ireland's difficulty to endanger her religion. Having a fresh-trained cargo of his unequalled intriguers—Jesuits—conveyed to the country under Saunders and Allen, he left to their charge (no better) the reconstruction of his fallen power. Little dismayed at the present insignificance of Rome's sway or religion in the country, they hoped to aright it. Having cunningly pandered to, and aroused the national antipathy against England, the first proper step was taken. They next sought the most despicable and disgraceful means to alienate the lower priests and people from the Irish national Church and from England. Yielding to none in zeal for this bad cause, they proceeded to the remotest districts, where they enkindled national dislike, which they knew would engender animosity to the religion established by the nation the people were thus taught to hate. Once before an opposite course was pursued; but then it subserved papal interests, now it would only advance the country's prosperity and peace. They indulged, with their accustomed tact, the weak man's worst superstitions, and piously prompted

the strong to aid all rebels in the overthrow of English power. Mightly and mainly did they strive to retrieve the demolished papacy in Ireland. Taking advantage of the Desmond dispute already referred to, they dexterously and slyly extended the announcement—indeed, littleregarded—of Elizabeth's excommunication, and that therefore the rebels were not only at liberty, but bound, even in the face of the most stringent oaths, to fight against her or those who sustained her power. Pius V. did actually fulminate this damning bull, "which they adroitly handled" (*Mant*, i. 294; *O'Sullivan His. Cat.* lib. ii. c. 6.) The excommunication arrived "in the nick of time." Rebellion was at its height, and some sort of a justification was needed by the priests. The titular bishops—for now the Pope had commenced appointing bishops to the country, distinct from those holding succession from St. Patrick, then, as always the recognised prelates of the land—the titular bishops implored aid, as I find in Ware (*Ann. of Eliz.* p. 12, and Cox, i. 333), from the King of Spain, to upset the English power in Ireland, and fasten Rome's upon it. This bull *sanctifying* the most cruel and honourless seizure of the "heretic Queen's" possessions or person, produced bloody contests, and plagued the land with murderous "risings." "His holiness" looked on complacently in the distance at the agonies of those he had excited to rebel, and tenderly wrote then thus, in 1575:—

"We exhort all and singular of you, *by the bowels of the compassion of God*, that discerning the seasonableness of the opportunity, you will each, according to his power, aid the piety and valour of this noble Geraldine (Desmond), and fear not a woman who, very long since, is bound with a chain of anathema, and growing more and more vile every day, in her departure from the Lord, and the Lord from her; and that you may do this with the greater alacrity, we grant to all and singular of you, who, being contrite and confessing, shall follow your said general, and join yourselves to his army, in maintaining or defending the ancient faith, or shall forward his purpose by counsel, arms, provisions, or any other names, a plenary indulgence from all their sins."

The plenteousness of these gifts is proved by Cox

(i. 352) ; *Leland* (ii. 268) ; *Phelan, Mant*, and several others. Further, I find the Roman Catholic O'Sullivan setting forth (tom. ii. c. 4), that the author of the above graceless, artful, and brutal production, *pardoned temporally* and *eternally* a banditti of ruffians who infested Italy, provided they would accompany a newly chosen titular bishop of Killaloe to Ireland, and aid the rebels in overthrowing "law and order." They did land, it appears, the "gracious missionaries" still following their olden trade of illegal butchery and plunder. Oh ! how far were the Irish under the fatal mockery of Rome's friendship ! when those welcomed to rank in battle with the honest, upright, but excitable and deceived Celt, were the scum of fallen Italy—the midnight scoundrels of the Appenines ! The thieves were, indeed, no discredit to the cause of Rome, but disgraceful comrades for Ireland's sons. Having never known the luxury of Gospel light themselves, they the less regarded how far they helped in extinguishing it in Ireland.

But the Pope did not rest satisfied until he had repeatedly encouraged, *pardoned*, and besought Irish rebels to persevere. He provided for the passions and superstitious fears of millions. His Jesuits sowed the seeds of discord and malignity, which have been transmitted to posterity. Rebellion, massacre, plunder, with superstitious zeal, thus, in the guise of religion, were prompted. Anger, ill-will, coarse aversion, blind distrust, were similarly engendered. These, aided by slander and calumny, were the weapons Rome snatched at to arrest the Reformation. Such foul instruments, ever favourites of Rome, multiplied, and it may be affirmed, gained to an extent their aim.

Were the great moral wants I have already alluded to supplied by the Government, or by an efficient institution in any shape, Rome's intriguing and physical efforts, I am confident, could not prevail against the spread of true religion. The lamentable lack of education, especially in the vernacular tongue—the almost complete absence of scriptural knowledge—the imperfect or ill-qualified means of giving either beneficially, were the barriers to Reformation not grappled with at all. Beneath those

obstacles the wily Jesuits worked, and, daily rendering the impossibility of undermining them still greater, *secluded*, as it were, a portion of the Irish people in the profoundest ignorance and most burning prejudice. Then truly commenced the papalising and "setting apart" of those races of Irish, to this day more or less influenced by Rome.

The enemy of man and the foe of education did not remain solely at the helm of the avowedly anti-Reformation movement, directing its revolting, but well-strung machinery. He must, too, have been present to cloak the understanding of our legislators, and reduce them so much to indolence on this subject, as to have them, unwittingly of course, assist the monstrous combination to restrain the "labour of love." The enactments of our Parliaments, however well meaning, united blindly, as I have elsewhere substantiated, with the covert aggressions upon the Irish religion and understanding. While the enemy of both drilled his peculiarly deluded dupes, he subsidised those who legislated for the advancement of the cause, for they did actually but estrange the people, and retard it. This impolitic course is traceable from that to the latest time. No foe or force had been more detrimentally, and, doubtless unknowingly, adverse to the Reformation movement in Ireland than they who insisted upon its success. The few facts I have given, which could easily be multiplied from unquestionable authority, show, that instead of effectual steps having been taken to provide for the emergency, the opposite course was determinedly pursued. It is easy, then, to conceive how Rome again cultivated the misled and terribly-abused affections of Ireland. Her methods were unprincipled, her diligence excessive, her labourers acute, sagacious and unscrupulous. The result of her access to millions, through a knowledge of their language, wishes, and wants, and showing a laudable, if real, desire to serve them, was the implanting of a rancorous and lasting enmity against those on whose shoulders Rome was first enabled to step upon Ireland's neck. Having served this purpose, and now not likely to advance it by the same help, she merely consulted her own interest, by

endeavouring to extirpate the race which procured her a footing in the land. That is Romish gratitude!

But I have digressed from the narrative. Defeat— notwithstanding Popes' bulls, Jesuits' intrigues, and coarse and cunning zeal—followed the rebel Geraldines to the plain of battle. When the "Pope's blessed banner" was unfurled on the perjured yet "consecrated" field, the Jesuit Allen solemnly "invoked Heaven's benediction" on all engaged, and a special pardon for those who should fall, the number of whom he prayed to be few. Amongst the first he fell himself, pierced to the heart "with cold steel." The whole army was routed; some were captured and "dealt with leniently." Desmond, soon after the combat, was beheaded by a Kern! In fact, not one of all the chiefs in that papally sanctified rebellion survived its God-granted suppression. And he who was chiefly instrumental in entrapping the people to accept the "blessed service!" of murdering their kinsmen and fellows—Saunders, the second "prior" of the Jesuits—though he escaped being slaughtered on the field, had reserved to him a far more bitter fate. He was starved to death! His wretched corpse was found mangled and "buried in the bowels of beasts!" Heaven here exemplified fully the depth of Rome's blasphemy by treating its dupes with such unmitigated rigour!

Another occurrence I may mention here demonstrates the utter futility of such a power being arrayed against God! Who forgets the *Armada*, and its significantly providential destruction? The God of battles stood out himself as combatant in that case, and launched forth his irresistible tempest, dashing to pieces the proud armament which was vainly floated for the ruin of England and the extirpation of the Christian religion. Seven of its scattered vessels were driven upon the north-west coast of Ireland. There those men, branded with the vengeance of Heaven, were received and fêted not only with Irish hospitality, but with the enthusiasm inspired by Rome's priests, who taught the people that to Spain and Spaniards they were to look for riddance of

English heresy and sway. A captain of one of those vessels concocted a scheme with two Irish chiefs—O'Neil and O'Ruark—to land Spanish succour for a fresh rebellion. The lesson his late disaster must have imparted had but trifling weight! He was bold enough to have it repeated. Hardened man! the vessel which bore him safe from the terrors of the deep to Ireland, while engaged in one hellish expedition, scarcely swept him out of sight of that same shore, with new ardour in his bad cause, than it sunk for ever, leaving him and his crew buried in a watery grave.

No reverse, however woful, could well deter the Roman party from luring fresh followers to their mischievous policy. Pope Gregory XIII. ratified, in 1580, his predecessor's pardons and encouragements to all who sheltered the standard of the vainglorious, aspiring, and disconcerted heir of the Desmonds. Not content with this doubtful contribution to his own warfare, "his holiness" captained a new band of Italian robbers, who, having been made papally righteous, embarked for Ireland. "They landed in Kerry," say the Four Masters, "and were greater in name than in effect." Nothing could surpass their baseness and dastardism. But these attributes availed little, and none others could be suited to the success of their master's mission. James of Desmond, the chosen champion of the rebellion, while wandering at a little distance from his camp of disbanded thieves, came in contact with a relation, from whom he had stolen two *stageens* (old horses). They disputed first like fish-women, and then fought like dogs. Each was slaughtered by the other's hand. This unsoldierly contest is related by Cox (i. 359) and Phelan. Both of these authors agree that Pope Gregory, when writing about it, some time after, to John of Desmond, who succeeded the dead earl in the rebel command, exclaimed—"James has fallen fighting *valiantly* against the enemy!" How voracious, and how like "his holiness!" Of course, it was quite consistent, being the mere transubstantiation of truth! Nor is there anything particularly strange in the

new leader being considered by that Pope as "our well-beloved son, of eminent piety and learning," although historians speak of him as a flagrant, base, irreligious villain.

When peace permitted, the Parliament of 1569 directed its attention (Leland, ii. 245) to the spread of education and the repair of parochial churches. This was well. But the same fatal mistake of doing things after that fashion most repulsive to the Irish feeling was blindly persisted in. The language was not used as a medium of instruction, while former national slights and prejudices were unimproved, if not aggravated. To the delusive course thus pursued by the State, two faithful and Christian friends objected, and adopted the principles of their objections. These were the Chancellor Nicholas Walsh and the Treasurer John Kearney—both of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and formerly of Cambridge. They, in the year 1571, procured Irish types, and royal permission to print in that language. The Queen was pleased at this disposition to give the Irish God's Word in their own language, "in the hope," which Mant attributes to her (i. 293), "that He, in mercy, would raise up some to translate the New Testament into their mother tongue" for the people. This valuable effort produced, first a catechism in Irish, about 1571. Not, however, until the reign of James, in 1603, was the translation of the New Testament, thus commenced by Walsh, afterwards Bishop of Ossory, completed and published. The translation of the Old Testament, through the extraordinary exertions of Bishop Bedell, was begun about thirty-eight years after the publication of the New, and at last printed with Irish type in 1685.

The country at that time was in a deplorable state of prostration. No other words than those of the poet Spencer can adequately convey the results of the Pope's rebellions—holy, blessed, and sanctified, as they were! He says:—

"Notwithstanding that the same was a most rich and plentiful country, yet, ere one year and a-half, they were brought to such wretchedness as that any stony heart would rue the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came creeping forth

upon their hands, for their legs would not bear them : they looked like anatomies of death ; they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves : they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them, yea, and one another soon after ; insomuch as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves ; and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for a time, yet not able to continue there withal : so that in short space there was none almost left, and a most populous and plentiful country suddenly left void of man or beast."

Another terrific outbreak, kindled and inflamed by the same unrelenting hand, and headed by the "great" Hugh O'Neil, *alias* "Hypocrite Hugh," spread through the country in 1587 and '88. O'Neil, like the Desmonds, was an abandoned, greedy, voluptuous, corrupt, and ignoble minion of Rome, as he would be of any power ready to bribe him. They were, indeed, children well deserving such a guardian, and Rome had nothing to regret in all their periods of captaincy unless their misfortunes and defeats. O'Neil, however, after two or three treacherous and truckling struggles, placed himself in such restraint as gave a faint hope that he may some time be qualified for better things.

During the tranquillity which gradually established itself after O'Neil's cessation of hostilities, a very important advance was made towards the interests of religion and education in Ireland. It will be remembered that many causes combined to frustrate efforts set on foot, in former reigns, to establish a university. Bricknor failed because of a general apathy to help out his purpose ; Perrot, through lack of the kingdom's quiet, relinquished the accomplishment of that design ; but Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, had reserved to him the high distinction of perfecting a purpose oft so laudably both contemplated and attempted. "In Easter holidays," writes Ware in his *Annals of the year 1590*—

"Adam Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, and Lord Chancellor of Ireland, with others of the clergy, met the Mayor, &c., at the Tholsel, where he set forth 'how advantageous it would be to have a nursery of learning founded here, and how kindly her Majesty would take it if they would bestow that old decayed

monastery of All Hallows, which her father had at the dissolution of the abbeyes given them for erecting such a structure,' whereupon they unanimously granted his request."

On the 13th of March, 1591, the first stone was placed in the building, then warranted by royal letters patent; and on the 9th of January, 1593, students were first admitted into "THE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY AND UNDIVIDED TRINITY."

The Romish party very naturally felt greatly disturbed by this aggression on the plains of darkness. Peter Lombard expressed the depth of their animosity and infelicity at this long-needed provision being supplied. The resuscitation of collegiate education did not, however, supply a tithe of what was needful. Many gross imperfections in the ecclesiastical state of the country loudly called for redress. Many smaller grievances murmured remonstrance. Time and war had rendered the rulers ignorant of, and partly callous to every such monition, loud or low. Spencer in his *View of Ireland's State*, gives a harrowing picture of the inefficiency of the clerical corps, and, for the most part, of the utter uselessness of the ill-chosen prelates. The result of these anomalies was natural. "The people," writes Spencer, "be Papists by profession, blindly and brutishly informed; knowing *no* ground of *any* religion." Rome, then, had succeeded to her heart's content in ignoring the spread of enlightenment, by diverting the attention of the rulers from that aim, and forcing them to the task of repelling vexatious rebellions, while she coaxed the people from loyalty and learning.

In 1595, Rome's dangerous, crafty, and devastating broils, created for perfecting the same designs, were renewed by the dishonourable O'Neil. Sir W. Russell came hither, specially entrusted with the office of deputy, to quell these mutinous proceedings. After several severe contests, aid arrived from Spain to the rebel chief O'Neil, under the charge of a Spanish prelate, then nominated by the Pope to the bishopric of Dublin. He presented the "Prince of Ul-

ster," as the Pope's darling was flatteringly termed, with a "blessed plume," said to be plucked from the tail of a phoenix. O'Sullivan gravely informs us of this! Inflamed by so high a distinction, O'Neil then stood forth really the Pope's champion to "rid the land of heresy and Saxons."

The newly appointed titular of Dublin "brought from the Pope," writes O'Sullivan (tome iii. l. 4), "indulgences and *remission* of sins for *all* that would take up arms against the English, &c., and 22,000 pieces of gold for the purpose of paying the soldiery." Better aid in any sense he could not have furnished to support the leadership of O'Neil, to whom Essex justly and indignantly said, when hearing him vaunt of his piety, "Man, thou hast no more religion than my horse!" Blood again flowed in torrents through Ireland. Successes, defeats, and every vicissitude which characterises the frightful continuance of a cruel, relentless, and base rebellion, were afresh endured. Spaniards, led on by "Churchmen," fought blasphemously "in the name of Christ *and the King of Spain*."—(Leland, ii.) Bulls, pardons, and curses, in the same breath and from the same hand, were uttered and promulgated. Fierce and desperate were the struggles maintained by these outrageously great profanations. Rome renewed them at want and will, with a heart never damped by the bestowal of such atrocious blasphemies.

Those men whose ancestors were damned—*irretrievably damned* (!) by Pope John XXII. for warring against England's King, as Leland demonstrates, and, as I have stated in the case of Bruce, were now blessed—profusely blessed, by Pope Gregory XIII., for doing that same thing. Strange! and yet it is consistent with Rome. However, the distracted ambition of O'Neil, after still further shattering the Irish strength, and reducing her centuries in the standard of "advancement," was disastrously defeated in 1601. Rome's *blessings* (!) again recoiled upon her sordid head, and cursed her own cause. But alas! her diabolical attempts sacrificed the best interests of poor Ireland, and left our noble

land gasping beneath the consequences of her nefarious "meddling."

It is repeatedly urged that priests and people suffered persecution, by Elizabeth's orders, on account of their religion. I am only writing of Ireland, and so far as that country is concerned, no assertion can be more graceless or unfounded. Who that can conceive the frightful nature of the rebellions originated and fostered by Rome, will not at once see the difficulty of dealing leniently with their leaders—men convicted of the worst political offences? Who that mourns Ireland's miserable condition, increased by these rebellions, will not curse its cause, and think no rigour adequate to punish the promoters of such evils? Not that traitors were Roman Catholics did our laws condemn them; but it so happened, as I grieve to write it has generally happened, that Roman Catholics were those only who incited to rebellion—who alone took illegitimate and brutal means to vanquish the power which disapproved of their religious tenets. On this account alone were they made amenable to the laws of treason, and most deservedly punished. By terror and terrific strife priests sought to rule in Ireland—by both they were necessarily subdued. In the second book of *Plowden's History* my argument is thus sustained:—

"During Elizabeth's *whole* reign in Ireland we read of *no* imprisonment, banishment, or execution of any priest *for the sake of his religion.*"

On the 24th of March, 1603, Elizabeth vacated her earthly throne for one that fadeth not away. Her reign, from the causes disclosed in the narrative, was productive of little material good to the interests of the Church in Ireland. The method resorted to, with infatuated perverseness, to educate the Irish had not only an opposite tendency, but rekindled and enlarged their excitable prejudices to an inordinate degree. Any enactment, however likely to serve its purpose and the country's good, by a transfusion through the minds of Rome's ignoble plotters, assuming to be faith-

ful teachers of Christianity, was, therefore, more easily rendered loathsome and detestable to the people. Acts of every stamp, and designs however good, coming from Englishmen, were designedly looked upon with suspicion, and shunned. Having failed by a wilful oversight to retain the ground won at first, English legislators were afterwards less able to arrest the progressing alienation of the peasantry from regard to loyalty and respect to law.

CHAPTER VI.

(FROM THE YEAR 1603 TO 1690.)

SCHEMES OF PRIESTCRAFT AND STRUGGLES OF REFORM—ST. PATRICK'S FAITH AGAIN FORBIDDEN—PROVIDENCE PROTECTS HIS CHURCH.

How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? and how oft cometh their destruction upon them? God distributeth sorrow in his anger.—*Job*, xxi. 17. Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, till every one submit himself; scatter thou the people that delight in war. O God, thou art terrible! The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.—*Ps.* lxxviii. Come, let us return unto the Lord: for he had torn, and he will heal us: he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.—*Hosea*, vi. 1.

WHEN James, the first Stuart King of England, commenced his reign, comparative tranquillity was observable throughout the country. The favourers of Rome saw reason not to disturb, for a little while, this singular calm produced by their craftiness, because they were pleased not to hate the new King. Gradually, and after long intervals, bishoprics, whose occupiers had reformed, were re-presented for Rome generally by a foreign nominee of the Pope. On King James's accession, it appears that of the many titulars thus irregularly and disconnectedly appointed, only one was a resident in the country, while the lawful prelates were in regular possession. O'Sullivan, the Roman Catholic historian, leaves no room to dispute this fact, which, in the face of the boasted unbrokenness of the links of Roman Catholic prelacy, is important. The minor clerical offices, and they were then no sinecures, though lucrative, were similarly disposed of

by the Pope. This body of ecclesiastics—then some years forming to hold a place in Ireland quite distinct from the lawful successors of St. Patrick, and in immediate subjection to Rome—has continued up to the present day in that position, though not always so faithfully resident as now (*vide* O'Sullivan). But the peace which greeted James to his throne was not enduring. It served its purpose to quell suspicion and induce moderation, but did not uncover the King's designs. Skilled in such schemes, Rome soon conceived it better to unmask "the son of a Catholic martyr," as she insidiously styled James, and urge him to assume his "true colours," which the priests fondly believed partook of their own painting. With characteristic impudence, all the gorgeous exhibitions of their "scientific religion," accompanied by the demolition of Protestant shrines, immediately took place. The reformed religion was openly and bitterly denounced. To attend it was far more heinous in the eyes of the Pope than to sacrifice unto idols! Actually, in a bull exhorting the Romanists, and published in 1605, "his holiness" declares that this decision was according to his 'infallible judgment.'" In that same bull, to be read from the "Loftus MS." in Marsh's Library, the rebels received a Papal promise of physical succour from Rome, Spain, and Germany, and spiritual aid from heaven, whose majesty was represented as outraged by England and her religion!

The Jesuitic prelates and their subordinates already disaffected enough, became trebly so, if possible, when, to their horror, James, instead of standing by their interests, issued a proclamation, requiring them to fly the country. Although the order lay dormant on the statute book, it had the effect of revealing the King's mind, whose favours Rome fondly flattered herself were meant for none but her. Her hopes in that channel were only checked to rush more malignantly excited through another. Threats and curses, solemn and sullen, and sometimes couched in language incomprehensible to all but the initiated, were uttered within the altar rails against selected victims of England's "heresy." These

were the only "symbols" exhibited by Rome for a while after the royal proclamation. When such vehement denunciations became directed against "church" frequenters, one evil was made successful—crowded parish churches lost the bulk of their converted congregations, although Rome did not then regain them. They were yet Protestants in heart, but not sufficiently imbued with Protestant nobleness to set at nought priestly intimidation.

To shield himself from the unlimited license of Rome and the insufficiency of his enactment, James was constrained to form a "test oath," binding the papal subjects to acknowledge and uphold him, in spite of papal anathema, as, at least, a sovereign prince in these kingdoms. Pope Paul V. decreed, in the plenitude of his power and wisdom, that the test oath was irrational and illegal, and should not be submitted to even under tortures. Of course the Romish party obeyed him, and declined it. The gracious intentions of James to be conciliating were so far abortive. To a similar extent will all others succeed.

Under the viceroyalty of Sir A. Chichester, in 1607, a very decided effort was made to rescue the Church temporalities from their ruinous condition. A step in that direction was then of peculiar necessity; it was requisite even on account of hideous anomalies which, both in church accommodation and ministration, prevailed. These affairs shocked at first the awaking senses of those who had been ever accustomed to the ingenious devices and magnificent adornments which Rome makes to constitute sanctity of worship. The formularies of the restored faith of Patrick were sadly neglected, and Rome gained by this neglect. I may refer to Sir John Davis to substantiate this charge. He having accompanied the deputy about that time, in a tour of investigation, regrets, and little wonder, that—

"The incumbents, both parsons and vicars, did appear to be such poor, ragged, ignorant creatures (for we saw many of them in the camp), as we could not esteem any of them worthy of the meanest of these livings, albeit many of them are not worth more than forty shillings per annum."—(*Mant*, i. 358.)

Churches became dilapidated, preachers as scanty as shabby, and the people disgusted with both. A bishop of the period having reproached some parishioners, whom he blamed, according to Mant (377), "for carrying their children to Popish priests to be christened," they in excuse answered, "that they were compelled so to do, in regard they had no curate of our religion near unto them." The poor things were unwilling to live like beasts without religion; and having within reach no other than Rome's, which quite accorded with their humanity, they were indisposed to reject it. Anomalies extended and increased from the half-clad curate to the careless but well-fed prelate. Bishops gradually made absenteeism fashionable, and the State left sees very frequently unfilled. This amazing defect in our ecclesiastical management was the deadliest bane to Reformation. The growing disregard to its proper treatment rendered the impediment more inveterate. History proves, that of license there was enough; of holy zeal little; and of judicious government none. The hurtful effects of such inattention, when contributed to, and taken advantage of, by the wiliness of Rome's officials, who were steadily emulous of each other, to asperse Protestant truth for "Mother Church's" sake, cannot be misunderstood or exaggerated.

James set about repairing the establishment, which from sheer neglect had thus well-nigh fallen into decay. Considerable tracts in Ulster having become escheated to the Crown after the furtive and savage rebellion of Tyrone, and on which were several churches, were wisely apportioned to ecclesiastical uses. Scotch settlers, of industrious, independent habits and Christian principles, although not exactly conforming to the National Church, were likewise planted in that province, about the year 1611. Tithes were ordered to be paid as "a customary right." Schools were established, and many other useful and needed works set on foot.

In 1612, a royal visitation of the Irish Church was commanded by the King. Then the unremedied sore was exposed. Some places were, indeed, found possess-

ing Christian salubrity, notwithstanding the predominant unhealthiness. One or two bishops were to be heard conversing familiarly with Roman Catholics, "confuting their assertions by the touchstone of all truth, the Holy Scriptures." People even of the poorer class, as Mant relates, speaking of the then Bishop of Leighlin, "privately discovered their dislike of Popery" to some worthy minister or "those good bishops." The pious Prelate of Leighlin, with his co-partners, had to encounter various adversities in the spread of the Gospel. Like as now, the Reformer became a marked man with the priests. People were warned against "soul destroyers" (*i. e.*, preachers of Christ crucified, and Him only) and their "horrid teaching." Nothing can testify better than this opposition to the earnestness of the one and the success of the other. Cautions failing, and intimidation becoming disregarded in many cases, the wealthy Jesuits tried "bribery." With such well-known and oft-used Romish instruments in the feeble state of our Church arrangements, no wonder that the people were held in check then as they in a lesser degree are now.

The first general Parliament held by James, in 1613, was thronged by means of "Rome's bribery and intimidation," as Phelan and Cox explicitly prove, with partisans, "whose chief recommendations were some factious notoriety and the favour of the priesthood." With respectable consistency, the pets of the priests proved themselves wranglers and agitators upon the opening of Parliament. Even so early as that period they founded, with cool audacity, a "Catholic Association," because their unwarranted and overbearing insolence could not be borne with impunity. In the brawlers and demagogues thus originated, we can find an honest prototype of all modern Irish patriots; in the priestly interference which produced them, nothing astonishing or new. On an impoverished country, too, they set the well and advantageously copied example of a "Catholic rent." This impost was checked by proclamation, July 9th, 1613.

“Steel-clad rebellion” had now given way to brawling casuists and selfish notoriety-seeking agitators; changes had wonderfully come over the policy of Rome. And as to the former slaves who murdered innocence—cudgel physical force patriots—a Pope sent “benediction” and “promptings,” so also to those who led the altered current—as moral force braggadocios—Paul V. wrote, “transmitting thanksgivings, indulgences, and prayers for their excellent spirit and unbending resolution to maintain the Catholic Faith.” But the “feeders of public passion,” and “swallowers of private funds” did not deter James from proceeding in his work of renovation, which, were it accomplished as it should have been long before his time, would leave the land of which he became King, perfectly cleansed from agitators or rebels. Under his auspices, the first Irish convocation of prelates and clergy assembled in 1615.

The “agitators” required no stronger promptings than the open acts of King James to induce them to fix the yet unsettled state of their own “hierarchy.” Perhaps in angry emulation, or, perhaps, actuated by more solemn, though not more worthy reflections, the Romanists, too, held a synod at Armagh. The proceedings of that assembly are chronicled in an Ussher MS., preserved in the Library of T.C.D. (E. 38). It was presided over by Peter Lombard, who was named titular primate, after a fifteen years’ absence of Rome’s primatial representative. What becomes of the vaunted unbrokenness of Rome’s successive prelates, with this fact conceded? The third document passed in that assembly proves the littleness of respect the assembled “prelates” had for an oath of allegiance, by completely ignoring that given to the King. The next “decree” denounced the reformed worship, and those who sanctioned it.

About that same time, according to O’Sullivan, new classes of Romish clergymen were dispersed amongst the people. They formed a distinct branch of the Romish Church, somewhat more learned, and not a whit less fierce than that existing before their arrival. They are, and by no unfriendly pen, represented as, “low, vile, clownish,

ignorant, hypocritical, barbarous, disgusting, cunning, drivelling, sycophantish, and scheming fellows." Mark you, that these epithets—enough to satisfy any man's bigotry—are not of my invention, nor yet of a prejudiced witness. They are the choice designations of him who knew them best, and would speak least disrespectfully of them—no less a personage than their own primate, Peter Lombard, has thus portrayed them. This Romish prelate, in that unflattering but honest strain, writes, where will be found these designations, in the 296th page of his *Comm. de Regno Hibernio*, dedicated to Pope Clement VIII. What an honoured acquisition to Ireland, to be sure, such an importation of "filed-off" representatives of the Pope must have been. These men, recollect, then crowding upon the land, are the predecessors of the present Romish priesthood. They soon superseded, in the estimation of the Irish peasantry, the easy, old priests who then lived. By an education "abroad" they had acquired a certain novel polish, which enhanced their mastery over the peasants' hearts, too superstitiously susceptible. They all claimed their livelihood, their ordination, and their mission from Rome. Therefore, to the Pope only were they loyal, and to him only can their successors be loyal.

When these graceless missionaries were scattered through the land, a fierce jealousy sprung up between them and the lawfully appointed ministry, to whom, in every point but zeal, they stood diametrically opposed. I need not remind my readers, that the clergy of the Irish National Church, like their predecessors, Patrick, Columkille, Colman, and a host of other sainted beings, withstood foreign jurisdiction, "loved God, and honoured the King." There is no necessity to point attention to the concord between the doctrines of the national ministry and those held by the ancient saints whom they succeeded; nor to mark the chaos between those taught by Rome's newly "accoutred clique," and those of the early saints, from whom they separated. I will merely observe, that when Ireland's Church was recovering from the blast given her by Rome, that system again divided

the spoil with Christ, and weakened the convalescent Church. At that time (17th century) properly began the notable and peculiar operations of the Romish Irish Church, as opposed to the native Irish Church.

The reign of "the Stuart" came to an end in 1625, without any encouragingly sustained, and, therefore, no decidedly successful effort towards the thorough evangelisation of Ireland. To the yet feeble state of the Church, and to her rulers past want of diligence and the disinclination to bestow temporal aid, in order to organise a proper movement, as well as to an injudicious ministry, this may be mainly attributed. The causes were equal to the result. Here, in the words of the Bishop of Down, condensed from Mant (p. 415), is a very clear summary of the reign now closed, and an acute forecast of those causes which aided the backwardness of the movement, and were so decidedly prejudicial to its success:—

"The reign of King James has exhibited the Church of Ireland with features similar to those which marked it under the preceding reign, but exemplified in a greater variety of instances. Complaints have been heard of an insufficiency of ministers, of an incompetency of clerical income, and of a want of material edifices for the celebration of divine worship; and the complaints have been echoed through every diocese.

"In Ulster, the King testified his desire to improve the condition of the Church by grants of land to the clergy, but in many cases his good intentions were defeated by an inadequate execution. And, although efforts were made for fixing the clergy in their proper residences, and for supplying them with buildings for their official ministrations, the existing evils do not appear to have been ever fairly grappled with by the governing powers, or to have called forth a great and simultaneous effort for their remedy, &c. The rural districts in particular are described as presenting a spectacle of almost total abandonment and desolation.

"The same observation, as to the absence of co-operating and combined exertions, *under the auspices of the authorities of the kingdom*, applies to the attempts made for the instruction of the people at large, by the instrumentality of the Irish language. Many instances have fallen under our notice of the existence of Irish incumbents or curates, of Irish readers, and Irish clerks; but these provisions seem to have been the result of *individual* projects of improvement, rather than of a general united effort of authority. At the same time, they were met by united and

vigorous exertions on the part of the Popish emissaries. Thus, little progress appears to have been made in bringing the people in general within the fold of the Reformed Church of Ireland."

It will be recollected, that when James became England's King, Rome, deeming it a most expedient course, displayed, even in her trivial acts, symptoms of great joy—feigned or real. This spontaneous manifestation was unwisely regulated, and damaged its promoter's design. So also the similarly glad panic which seized her upon the first Charles being crowned produced like disadvantages. Jesuits with new evil aspirations and fresh provoked anger, returned in droves to the country. Parish churches, with unmitigated boldness, were again snatched from the possession of the established ministry. Processions, decked in all the showy finery which preserves "respect by attraction" for Rome, and are distasteful to true worshippers, were incautiously formed in public. As now, new chapels rapidly sprung up, erected by the activity of exacting friars. The encroachments becoming habitual, grew more openly vexatious. Charles was passive, though irritated. At length Papal progress and English desire of resistance arrived at an inverse proportion. Prompted by the hostile adversaries of Rome, called Puritans, the King avowed himself her foe. A contribution was levied on the Romanists in consideration of some desired and promised GRACES. The money to be thus procured was meant to uphold an army. One instalment was paid. No GRACE that was worth favour followed. The second instalment was demanded, but not so easily collected. It was, however, after some sturdy denials, adroitly obtained by the Deputy Wentworth, who was enabled to evade "the graces," because of the ingenious manner by which he fastened on a settlement.

The Church, whose condition had as yet been little amended, was not to be utterly neglected under Charles. The trifling but bitter feuds which, a short time before, had arisen between the non-conformists and the regular clergy, were again furiously raging. These unworthy con-

tentions proved harassing hindrances to Reformation. Men mostly devoid of a good education were those famous in extending such damages. To arrest this and other evils, a petition was presented, praying Charles to—

“Settle a rural clergy, endowed with competency to serve God at His altar, by which barbarism and superstition should be expelled, and the subject taught his duty to God and his sovereign.”

Charles was propitious. A uniformity between the Church establishment in England and in Ireland was next perfected. Such courses were well, and wise, and seriously wanted. Opportunities are at best evanescent, therefore wantonly to hesitate embracing them is positively dangerous. Delays, partaking of that nature in its worst sense, had hastened the Church of Ireland a second time to the brink of ruin. Charles saw its imminent peril, and, perchance, instinctively comprehending the cause, readily turned a friendly eye to its safety. The measures he authorised were well meaning, but miserably inadequate. Many stumbling-blocks, besides those named, were, however, swept out of the path of reform. Too many, and those the greatest, still blocked it up.

Although the vigilance of the State was then, as always, lulled and counteracted, the godly toil of magnanimous individuals saved us from the greater turpitude. About the time I write of, the celebrated Bishops Ussher and Bedell lived—reformers of sound principles, intellectual eminence, and active indefatigable zeal. Bedell entered upon his diocese of Kilmore while it was under so

“Many disorders, that there was scarce a sound part remaining. The revenue was wasted, and all sacred things had been exposed to sale in so sordid a manner, that it was grown to a proverb; and there was scarce enough remaining of both these revenues to support a bishop, who was resolved not to supply himself by indirect and base methods.”—*Mant.*

This noble prelate devoted himself with unflagging and pious fortitude to the combat between truth and error. His teaching of the word was not unblessed. Many converts, through him, were gained to Christ, and by his labour, too, was the neglected vineyard greatly

cleansed. Mant thus describes his mode of conducting the sacred mission (p. 467):—

“In order to furnish his converts with the means of instructing others, he reduced the elements and most necessary truths of Christian knowledge into a short catechism; which he printed, together with some forms of prayer, and some instructive and edifying passages of Holy Scripture, on a sheet, one page of which was English and the other Irish, and circulated it through the diocese, where the Irish joyfully received it. By his directions, also, the Common Prayer Book was read in Irish in his cathedral, for the benefit of his converts; and all his clergy were encouraged in setting up parish schools.

“Besides the New Testament, and the Book of Common Prayer, having been already translated into Irish, he determined on placing in the hands of the natives the Old Testament also in the same language. And he procured a person qualified for the work; and, having made himself acquainted with the language, he employed his diligence in revising and correcting the translation, and in a few years finished it, and engaged for and set out the business of having it printed, when, by the breaking out of the rebellion, he was interrupted before the accomplishment of this great design.”

So universally respected did the illustrious Bedell (like the not less illustrious Ussher) become, that a Romish priest, a teacher of “exclusive salvation,” while standing over his grave, reflecting upon the deceased prelate’s past career, thrillingly exclaimed, “O let my soul be with Bedell.” But the uncompromising and salutary course adopted by these prelates met little favour in higher quarters. Then, as now, the ruling powers looked coldly on, but dared not avowedly despise the efforts, whose elevating tendencies they were incapable of appreciating. “This plan of Reformation,” says Mant, “was not countenanced by the Viceroy.” He continues:—

“It was in those days the prevailing opinion, that for counteracting schism and sacrilege, as well as for extirpating the earlier evils from which the Reformation sprang, the only expedient was to allow the Church the free exercise of spiritual power, and to render it significant and operative by civil penalties.”

England’s object was mainly to subjugate the country through the Church. She cared not to purify the char-

nel-house of Ireland. To the opposite end tended any industry our rulers exhibited. They acted on a selfish and injurious motive, calculated to give harbourage to everything unclean and disgusting. Contemning the sacred and wholesome principles of the Gospel mission, England thus, inconsiderately, chose rather to force upon the Church in such case a mere apology, a system of compulsory and unintelligible morality, than the impressive and durable one to preach Christ, whose doctrines disperse crime and evils. By the latter means the Church would be employed in the due exercise of its proper functions. But that she was not so employed history laments.

While individuals struggled to disseminate the Gospel, and the State thus culpably impeded its spread, Rome was not inactive: her peculiar machinery was at full and foul play. Another "blessed rebellion," headed by Roger O'Moore, burst into life, brawling agitation having failed. It aimed at the complete restoration of Romanism, and so confidently had the favourers of that system looked upon the result, that their cry became—"Our *dependence* is in God and Roger O'Moore!"

On the eve of the explosion of a desperate conspiracy, formed to take Dublin Castle, a convert, named Conelly, having accidentally heard of the design, ran to the Castle, informed the deputy of the impending danger, and saved, perhaps, thousands from slaughter. What a lesson this convert's brotherly love imparts. How like the result expected as the effect of that incense which purifies, and that light which quickens. He treasured the knowledge he had derived from truth, and routed the woful prejudices of early training. No consideration, contrary to the well-being of his King and country, possessed the convert's heart. Prevented by the Gospel precept, he dare not conceal the awful design he became providentially acquainted with. Impelled by that book's sacred influence, he ran to rescue his fellow-sinners. The Gospel's Author blessed his labour. Give to thyself, O God, from out of Ireland, thousands like him!

But the convert only snatched one morsel from the opening jaws of a tyrant rebellion. "The Catholic Army,"

as the rebel force was audaciously called, went on under the solemnly-invoked blessings of Rome's priests, perpetrating the most revolting cruelties against Englishmen; and against Christians who bore the ban of Rome's denunciations! They who had been the richest in the land soon appeared, says the historian, "*perishing creatures, like living ghosts, in every street*"—victims of denunciations! Mothers, with suckling babes, were savagely murdered, and their infants stretched to starve by their sides. But I should write a harrowing catalogue of barbarities, were I to sum up half the hellish acts of those who were marshalled under papal blessings! Here is a specimen of their "refined cruelties," given upon the respectable evidence of Sir John Temple:—

"A woman who had been half-killed by the rebels, was put into a dry hole, made for a well, and made fast in it with stones, whereof she languished and died, while the rebels bragged how many of them went to see her kick and toss in the hole!"

Truly our rulers were terribly deluded in fostering the teachers of such human fiends. Bibles, with as much fury and detestation as distinguish modern monks, were then cast "into flames or mill-ponds." But the atrocities of that time are beyond description, and, if described even meagerly, would terrify the hardest heart. In a "Narrative," by the primate's chaplain, Rev. N. Bernard, they will be found, in some sort, portrayed.

The rebels, engaged in this satanic war, were daily succoured from abroad, and had also accessions from those at home who feared priestly denunciations more than they admired the cause. Destitution, and its concomitant miseries, were again the portion of poor Pope-persecuted Ireland. But, lest the country might recover in the least by a cessation of those hostilities, a Cardinal Renuncini was sent hither to perpetuate the frightful spectacle. No better selection could be made. He is represented as a bigoted and grasping man—fit Nuncio from that power which had prostrated poor Ireland. His mission was not "Peace on earth," &c., but a conti-

nuance of the frightful war and horrors faintly alluded to. By "intimidation and bribery" he sought to induce the deputy, Ormond, to become, at least in name, a Romanist, and yield the country again to Papal sway. Ormond could ill conceal his honest indignation at this proposal, and advised with his King, who nobly told him—

"Rather to leave all things to the chance of war, than to grant such terms as must destroy the Protestant profession."

Fierce and cruel was the carnage consequent. Rome's titular bishops and archbishops, casting aside any pretence to the ministry of peace, rode out as rebel knights to reimpose fetters on groaning Ireland. One of those worthies—he of Tuam, then as now a restless agitator and quarreller—in single combat with Sir Charles Coote "bit the dust," in spite of all the "holy preservatives" that were found upon him. Amongst several blessed baubles in his pocket was got a copy of a *private treaty* made by the King with Glamorgan of Somerset, granting almost all the things the rebels wished for! Conciliation, then as now a refuge of rulers, was regarded perfidious even by Rome, and deservedly despised. How inexplicable is our adhesion even yet to such an exploded theory. A treaty, after terrible havoc had been made, was drawn up in 1646, by which an exemption from the oath of supremacy was granted to the rebels, and a test oath accepted by them. The Nuncio was outrageous at this treaty, to which he objected, because it did not completely restore the usurped and forfeited position of Rome. He bade the Irish tear it up, and look to his master for aid. He even went so far as to muster an army, which was designated the "Nuncio's," and commanded by O'Neil. Leading on this force, he resisted the proclaimed treaty with barbarous industry and considerable success. The army of the monarch, however, after many defeats, ultimately triumphed, leaving the "blessed and pardoned" dupes of Rome a sadly shattered wreck. The Nuncio then foamed and fretted, denounced and prayed, all in the same breath, but to no purpose;—people had grown, even so late, to understand these paroxysms of pious

rage. Their frequency destroyed their effect, too often before then powerful.

The treaty, which the Nuncio condemned, though giving the Papal party far less than they expected, gave them far, far more than they were justly entitled to. It was soon sadly abused.

From the time Charles became King until his decapitation in 1649, the sketch here given of "affairs" during his twenty-four years' reign, will at once show how various and seemingly impassable—how rugged and numerous had been the barriers to the Reformation movement. The influence of the priesthood, from combined causes, grew terribly noxious. Rebellion, in which most of them took prominent parts—in the field and out of it—had endeared them to the people by whose side they fought and fell. Misdirected in all their passions and prejudices, the poor Irish warmed daily with greater intensity towards men who taught them to understand that they had sacrificed all to the interests of the land, when they were actually but labouring for self. Sunk in poverty, which these priests made them believe holy, and partook of; living in the worst political servitude, and slumbering in an intellectual torpor, the Irish could not easily be undeceived. Little effort being made to enlighten them, they could not possibly avoid fully submitting to a mastery which they were induced to consider profitable to soul and body. Any attempts to uncover their error was distasteful at first; and then if you desired to separate the priests and people, their long association, similarity of sufferings, assimilation of feelings and of prejudices, guarded by ignorance, stood up apparently an insurmountable difficulty. These obstacles were generally only examined in the *bulk*, not in *detail*; hence the illusion of their vastness. Some individuals, who saw the formidable aggregation in its disjointable shape, took courage to destroy it deliberately by pieces. They worked, however, alone. Disinclined to uphold a movement so nobly and singly set on foot, the State emphatically abused every opportunity which had offered to that end. Thus the stronghold of error became strengthened and enlarged—the progress of truth weakened and fettered.

But to how alarming an extent was this neglect made absolute during the Protectorate of Cromwell. One hateful and harrowing scene of internal contention, cruel massacre, unsparing dilapidation, and wanton tyranny disfigures the annals of 1649. The papal power was, indeed, trodden physically to dust, but gathered bitterness in the ashes of its defeat.

The *merely* Irish were then packed into Connaught, which was likened to hell. Thither also, as a place of security, flocked priests of every grade, who still further "darkened the dark." The people, thus "transported" into the far west of the country, imagined that the Italian-commissioned priests had, for their sakes, become voluntary partakers of this banishment; and not only cheerfully, but with increased admiration, submitted again to their rule. In that west have the Irish clung to their deluders with a warm and honest, though blind affection. This they have continued to hold until the last few years. There, too, in the priestly track, followed utter ignorance and poverty. These are all now, blessed be God, being expelled before the sword of the Spirit; and with them also vanishes the remnant of that order which first fostered them in the moment when peril gave it mastery.

The Church machinery, under Cromwell, was stayed, on the verge of preparation for a good work, by the most perplexing and extreme departure from the spirit of its law on the part of the incautious *missionaries* of that time. When Cromwell, wielding an iron arm, felled the political strength of Rome, no advance in the good cause, but much retrogression was the result. I shall, therefore, pass on to the restoration of monarchy in 1660, under Charles II.

Williams, the then Bishop of Ossory, thus depicts the state of the Church upon the accession of this King. I quote from Mant (pp. 663-4) :—

"If you walk through Ireland, I believe, that throughout all your travel you shall find it, as I found it, in all the ways that I went, scarce one church standing and sufficiently repaired for seven that are ruined, and have only walls without ornaments, and most of them without roofs, without doors, without windows but the holes to receive the winds to entertain the congregation.

With respect to the deficiency of ministers, he observes—As God is without churches for his people to meet in to serve him, so He is without servants enabled to do him service, to praise His name, and to teach His people; and to have churches, and no churchmen, is to no purpose. But why have we not such churchmen as are able to instruct God's people? I say it is easily answered: that it is not so easy to get able, worthy, and sufficient churchmen, unless there were sufficient means and livings to maintain them."

This lamentable, though not strange state of things, underwent a change in 1660. Properly qualified men were then appointed to the vacant bishoprics. Schools were endowed. The University, which dwindled to disuse, again assumed its abandoned functions, under the directions of the distinguished Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down. This nomination of an Irishman and a bishop was at that time most judicious and opportune. Ormond, the deputy, must have felt the force of an expression attributed to him in reference to the nomination of Taylor. He said:—

"The institution being to produce knowledge and piety amongst the natives, it would be most unjust discouragement to place a stranger over their heads."

But Lord Ormond was likely to be serviceable in God's cause, so he was superseded in his viceroyalty by a partisan of Rome, named Berkely. This man came here with the express order to secure moderately the interests of the Irish Church, but most probably he *meant* to secure warmly those of Rome. With his rude decisions in favour of the Pope, the less violent Romanists had, however, no sympathy. They even published remonstrances, maintaining that the Pope should not "of right" rule the land, and that it was impious to allege that "any subject may kill a sovereign of a different religion." These independent and upright men became, soon after, objects of the unrelenting enmity of their own bishops, being denounced and persecuted. Entrusted with a power he so seriously betrayed, the recall of Berkely, in 1675, was a blessing to Ireland. It averted further developments of Romish schemes and consequent bloodshed.

This deputy exhibited a coolness towards "conciliation" not now very remarkable. It is no secret that, on like principles, a viceroy, who only left this country a little before I write, disgraced his office and abused his trust far, far more. Berkely, however, set the base example, as I find from Mant (p. 656), that upon a titular prelate's—

"Application for the use of some of the plate and hangings, the furniture of the Castle, in order to the celebration of mass in Dublin with uncommon magnificence, the secretary of the Lord Lieutenant sent him the articles required for this illegal celebration of the superstitious rite, adding withal, as was said, an expression of his wish, that high mass might soon be performed in Christ Church Cathedral."

This defiler of his rule and betrayer of his trust was soon after replaced by the noble Ormond, who again gave Protestants the protection they needed, and Romanists no fears of danger. A severity of legislation, however, against that body unexpectedly called forth his approval. The "popish plot" had just exploded, and that naturally impelled him to be cautious in his bestowal of favours or encouragement of Romanists. The army was thinned of persons holding ultra-papal persuasions, none being left in its ranks but those of proven loyalty. Several other restrictions, totally unaccompanied with cruelty, were found absolutely necessary for the well-being of the kingdom.

Charles died in 1685, leaving as much room as ever for the improvement of the Irish. Organised missionary efforts, with the view of their conversion, during his time, there were none. Individuals again give us the grand exception, and reproach the body Protestant. R. Boyle, aided by Dr. Wake, set to work, about that time, printing the Scriptures, for the purpose of disseminating the Word in the Irish tongue. But again politics came to the rescue of Rome :—

"The same year," writes Mant, "which witnessed the putting forth of the entire Word of God, as completed by the addition of the Old to the New Testament, witnessed also the accession of an anti-scriptural sovereign to the throne."

James II. once crowned, left his actions under the guidance of those only who wore the badge of Rome. Men like Fitton, who had been convicted of the worst baseness, and whose conscience, historians say, was bound by no law, met all favour. He, for instance, was made Chancellor. The spirit of Rome, under such encouragement, grew noisy in fierceness, and far more intolerant than was its custom. A deadly enmity between the professors of that system and Protestants was then firmly engendered. The expression of an opinion from the pulpit of the Irish Church, which controverted or questioned any doctrine of the Romish Church, was a heinous crime. To resist the inroads which Rome, by "intimidation and bribery" (thanks for that phrase, Dr. Cullen), continually made upon the Irish Church was punishable: while, on the other hand, Rome with impunity might do her worst against the Bible, its doctrines, and those who held them. The Pope had again in bridle-hand a power which invited him to rivet afresh upon Ireland's neck the yoke of his gorgeous superstitions. He did to that end what lay in him to do: Filled up the bishoprics; hanged "English rebels and Irish heretics." Protestants were worried and threatened with general destruction. Intolerance swayed.

But the actual and expected persecutions roused a latent energy within the Protestants to such "living vigour" as no priestcraft could subdue. Distracted, because of the continual danger from the "papist daggers," they crowded in frightened, angered, and vast numbers to Ulster, where they made Londonderry a general refuge. The Prince of Orange was in the field, resolved to smash the brand of persecution in papal hands, and bury it for ever in these kingdoms. Here was a hope—an answer from Heaven to the fervent prayers of the hunted Protestants.

James, abandoned by the English, whose religion he had treacherously betrayed, hoped safety in Ireland. But he forgot the depth of injury sustained by this country in his gratifying its pest, the "*dear Church of Rome.*" Unwilling, however, to trust an expedient of that kind

unreflectingly, he sought protection and advice of France. Encouraged and supported to his desire, he at length entered Dublin on the 24th of March, 1688, accompanied by Romanists of France, England, and Ireland. Derry was besieged with terrible strivings to "tear it piecemeal," but God preserved its persecuted inmates.

Not content with the savageness of war, the papal party intruded upon Dublin University Romish fellows and a Romish provost. While struggling against the hated dictation of such rulers, it "declined to shine" as it was wont. Jesuits made a bold and nearly successful demand for its complete possession. Providence, however, upholding the heroic energy of the Irish Church, and blessing the chivalrous daring of Protestantism, dispelled their illusions, and destroyed their hopes.

William landed at Carrickfergus on the 14th of June, 1690, and the last day of that month crushed the serpent's head upon the banks of the Boyne. Blasted prospects were then laid out before the Romish—hope and prosperity before the Irish Churches.

No one can expect that the Reformation movement was advanced during the reign of the vacillating leader of Roman Catholicism, while it is easy to conceive how much it was impaired. Fresh bitterness was instilled in Irish prejudices, already bad enough. Romanist and Protestant thenceforth regarded each other with more stubborn and rancorous animosity, and more irreconcilable distrust than hitherto. How these feelings were created and fostered, the events related appear to me to explain of themselves so fully as to need no further elucidation.

CHAPTER VII.

(FROM THE EIGHTEENTH TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURIES.)

RAMIFICATIONS OF ROMISH INTRIGUE—SENSIBLE SENTIMENTS AND TRANSIENT EXCITEMENT—REFORMATION GENERALLY STAYED, THOUGH PARTICULARLY URGED.

Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.—*Jer.* iii. 22. We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers. Do not abhor us for thy namesake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.—*Ps.*

MANY political disqualifications, brought on by their past acts, were necessarily placed upon the Roman Catholic body during the joint reign of William and Mary. But, under their government, too, much good accrued to the National Church, because, in the appointment to the episcopates, as Mant observes (ii. 121), “the chief authority seem to have acted for the most part with integrity and discretion.” This was true of the time, at least, while the Queen lived. The part then taken by the rulers generally was altogether worthy of the cause and effect, which latter, Mant concludes, was especially evidenced by Reformation extending rapidly “in the higher orders.” Before the good Queen’s death, little material alteration was, however, made in the still deranged state of parochial churches and schools. Her demise left little hope that any for the better would be made. Archbishop King, writing, at that time, to the then Bishop of Down, so deeply deplores the awful neglect, that he exclaims (Mant, ii. 94) :—

“It is not possible our Church should subsist long in this languishing and crazy condition; but few regard or mind it, and

those that are apprised of it are either afraid or wearied out with the ill-treatment with which they meet."

Further on, lamenting the pernicious results of legislative inattention, he thus expresses himself:—

"O, my Lord! we have fallen in evil times, in which it is a step to a preferment to the person that will give assurance that, as soon as he is in it, he will disgrace or betray it: this is the fatal method has been taken since the restoration to destroy us, and is still prosecuted, though by different hands; in short, my Lord, we are not like to obtain one good law for the Church."

The leaven here hinted at seems to savour of a certain system of "coaxing coercion," which characterises the advocates of the present "National Board." In the endeavours of the faithful Christian Bishop King, there is observable the glowing spirit which animated individuals, while he smites, for our caution, the dormancy of those who had the way, but not the will, to redress the crying grievances of the Church. In his own diocese was formed an admirable model, but few copied its efficient management. He was good and pious in the full meaning of the words. Not only did he labour to expel the darkness of Romanism, but, as Mant remarks (ii. 13), he worked upon the Nonconformists, persuading them to union with the discipline and creed of his Church. His ministry was blessed. One result may be given as a specimen out of many:—Two Irish-speaking clergymen were appointed, at the desire of some Highland settlers, to perform divine service for those Highlanders, who would avail themselves of it. "One of these," says Mant (p. 23)—

"Being a beneficed clergyman, and the other receiving a competent allowance from the bishop. They formed a congregation of four or five hundred persons, none of whom understood English. The good effects of establishing these two clergymen, capable of officiating in the Irish language, in the diocese of Derry, were so apparent, that several of the same description were, for the same reasons, employed in the northern parts of the county of Antrim: for that district having been also deserted

by the Irish, on the landing of the English army near Carrickfergus, in 1689, many families from the western isles of Scotland, who understood no language but the Irish, settled there. At their first arrival, they attended the divine service of the church: but not understanding it by reason of the language in which it was celebrated, in a short time they went over to the communion of the Church of Rome, desirous of having the benefit of such exhortations as the Popish priests usually gave their congregations in the Irish tongue; and, when they were asked their motives to the change, they answered, 'that it was better to be of that religion than of none at all:' an inevitable consequence of no provision being made for performing the offices of religion for their benefit in a language which they understood.' By these means, many Highlanders and popish natives are added to our Church: whereas, in other places, *where such care is not taken of them*, the natives do not only continue in popery, but many of the Highlanders are drawn off to separate meetings, or to the Romish superstition and idolatry."

This is, in fact, a pretty accurate picture of the movement as it then was carried on, and as it then stood. Tardy in process, confined in its limits, and unsupported by many in its operations, it was peeping, as it were, through mighty incumbrances, without a thorough organisation existing to aid and direct it. There were few reapers for an immense harvest.

Anne succeeded her royal "brother-in-law" in 1702. In her reign, the indefatigable Bishop King lost favour with all those whose conduct his generous, pious, and noble efforts silently impugned. Boyle, about that period primate, cast an evil slur, by his incapacity, on the primatial chair, the influence of which damped the whole cause. Dr. Marsh succeeded him. He, too, though a good man, was too feeble for the arduous duties of that office. These selections were designedly bad. Bishop King seemed far too good for such a nomination, and was consequently passed over. Our rulers stupidly, if not purposely, overlooked God's cause. A grant of £5,000, wherewith the library was built, perhaps was not only meant to reward our unshakingly loyal University, but to give the authorities a good reputation. It was unreal encouragement.

From the dull, dismaying monotony of the past annals,

where is seen little beyond neglect of the good cause, it is refreshing to turn to the results of any zealous though single-handed exertion. A good clergyman named Richardson, rector of a parish in Cavan, saw how alarming the torpor of our episcopacy had become for the interests of a cause he felt it his bounden duty to uphold. Believing that the crisis of success had but by a firm and unanimous effort to be brought about, his thoughts instinctively reverted to the most effectual mode of doing it. Having preached the necessity of action to his drowsy brethren, many of them needing but to be aroused, were not slow in appreciating and warmly seconding his exertions. The clergy were told by him that they were guilty of reprehensible laziness, and incurred the anger of the mighty God, whose negligent workmen they were. The nation was put on the alert. Inquiry spread. The doors being cast open upon their truly rusty hinges, hundreds of Romanists flocked into "the Church." So well was the labour of love received in its beginning, that it was deemed advisable to excite the interest of Convocation in our Parliament. It was done with that success which procured the following resolution I have copied from Mant, who enables me to publish all the joyous tidings of that time. This well-meaning paper was drawn up on the 3rd of March, 1703 :

"Resolved, that the endeavouring the speedy conversion of the Papists of this kingdom is a work of great piety and charity ; in order to which, it is the opinion of this House, that preachers, in all the dioceses of this kingdom, preaching in the Irish tongue, would be a great means of their conversion. And, therefore, that application be made to the most reverend and right reverend the lords archbishops and bishops, that they take into their consideration what number of such preachers will be necessary in every diocese, and how they may be supported."—(Vol. ii.)

The bishops, wretchedly infatuated, threw cold water upon so gloriously noble an attempt. They, forsooth, thought it was desirable and useful "where practicable," but no more ! Again, were individuals cast upon their own exertions. No united aid was given—no decided steps taken. These dispiriting difficulties

did not daunt the stern champions of true Christianity. Mant tells us of the Reformation's progress even then under several God-fearing men. Amongst them are Dr. Ashe of Clogher, and Mr. Browne, rector of Donacary in Dromore. "Mr. Browne," writes Mant (vol. ii.)—

"Was well qualified for the work, by a perfect acquaintance with the Irish language, and by a facility in expressing theological ideas in that tongue after a manner agreeable to the native hearers. By great kindness also, and humanity, and by works of charity among the poor, he gained their hearts and affections. And thus he took advantage of the great delight which he observed in them at hearing divine service in their own tongue; and he accordingly sought them in their own dwellings; appointed with them public meetings; attended at the places where they usually assembled to hear mass, taking care to be present when mass was just ended, and before the congregation was dispersed; and thus seized every opportunity of instructing them, administering to them the ordinances of religion, reading to them chapters of the Old and New Testaments in Irish, and reading the prayers of the Church out of an Irish Book of Common Prayer. The result was, that many of those whose parents and relations, and who themselves also had previously gone to mass, were brought and adhered to the communion of the Church, notwithstanding the menaces and denunciations of the popish priests; and that he impressed the generality of his popish neighbours with a favourable opinion of the religion which he professed and taught, many of them declaring that they were always kept in the dark by their priests, but that this man showed them the light, and said nothing but what was good, and what they understood."

Another true and Gospel disciplined labourer in the weed-clad vineyard was the Rev. Walter Atkin, of Cloyne. Having acquired the native language, he taught and conversed with the people on their salvation in it; and then invited them to church, where they heard these truths with blessings. Learning by this means the beauty of God's own Scriptural religion, the people were often heard to say:—

"*That if they could have that service always, they would no more go to mass.* In process of time," continues Mant (ii. 167), "Mr. Atken's ministerial labours became so acceptable to the natives, that they of their own accord sent for him from all parts of his parish to baptize their children, to solemnize matrimony, to church their women, to visit their sick, and to bury their dead."

The undeniably great effect such exertions produced in the country obliged the Upper House of Convocation at length to admit their efficacy. According to Mant (ii. 21) they agreed that "this house, conceiving great hopes from the present juncture of affairs, that many of the recusants may be prevailed upon to join themselves in communion with the Established Church," do thank God for such a favourable opportunity, and urge its improvement. Upon this acknowledgment being received, it was resolved by the gladly surprised clergy that the Bible and liturgy of the Church be printed in the Irish language. These and several contingent advances were directly made. In their furtherance the University gave a cheerful co-operation. Dr. Hall, then vice-provost, at his personal expense, procured a competent Irish teacher for the purpose of imparting *privately* a knowledge of his native language; but the archbishop and fellows extended the information through a *public* professor. Here, at length, was remedied a gigantic defect long and oft complained of.

The Romanists had greatly lost, and were still losing, influence in the kingdom. In 1710 they rendered themselves particularly obnoxious by spurning the oath of abjuration. The people, to a great extent—excitement having passed away—evaded their priests, and knew no religion, not even Rome's. In that crisis, Ormond, being deputy, besought the Queen to foster the rising operations and the increasing opportunity to spread the Gospel. She heard the prayer, and desired the end. "But," said Bishop King, as quoted by Mant, "I do not find that it is desired by *all* that they should be converted." Some had no sense of religion, and preferred no increase in the Church! Others could not approve of the methods proposed to that end, "so that between them, I am afraid little will be done" (Mant, ii. 224); and little was done!

Scarcely did these symptoms of an extending movement grow beyond indistinctness, than the old pernicious breath of favouritism placed untried and unsuited men in the bishops' chairs. Apathy almost to contempt

still really possessed the rulers in reference to this most vital matter. Possessed of the unpleasant knowledge that such an evil flourished, little wonder that the honest and upright Bishop King wrote thus :—

“It is plain to me by the methods that have been taken since the Reformation, and which are yet pursued by both the civil and ecclesiastical powers, that there *never* was *nor* is any design that all should be Protestants.”—*Mant*, ii. 230.

It is as plain to any one as that the “sun is bright,” who troubles himself to inquire into the facts, that whatever were their wishes, the steps taken by those in power had not the most distant reference to the success of God’s cause—they rather brought it into disrepute. While such men as Browne and Richardson, as well as others, heart and hand devoted to the sacred work, were yet unremitting in their efforts, worthless men for aught known of them, were elevated over their heads to the episcopacy. If, indeed, the men thus chosen condescendingly stooped to the Lordly labour, it was so indiscreetly and unseasonably as to endanger all. But they little heeded Heaven’s cause, not being Heaven’s selected. As Mant properly observes, the favourites of profligate earls were thrust into sees just recovering from similar blows. Englishmen—strangers to our customs or language—were rashly forced upon us. The sees were replunged under the old indolent agency, to Rome’s delight. Hastening back by the dreadfully culpable negligence of the authorities again to its drowning state, the fidelity of the few was unequal to the task of retaining the ground lost by the recklessness of the many. Therefore did Archbishop King exclaim :—

“I think I could demonstrate that the Church has lost more hearts and ground these last four years in Ireland, than she did since King James came to the crown.”—*Mant*, ii. 269.

Upon the death of Anne, in 1715, George of Hanover was proclaimed monarch. Four years after his accession, the celebrated Dean Swift became the leader of “patriots”—rather an odd way to convert the Irish!

He fought, however, for the interests of Church purity when not overborne by his pert frivolities. I am inclined to think that a fair view of the unrestored state of the Irish Church during George's reign may be had from this extract of a letter addressed by Bishop King to an English friend, and quoted in Mant (ii. 289):—

“Our chief governors are changed once in three years, and they commonly bring chaplains with them, who succeed to bishoprics, if they fall, or to the best preferments, these being generally in the Crown: and hence your lordship may guess what encouragement there is for the clergy educated here. Your lordship perhaps will be surprised, when I tell you, that in all Ireland there are not six hundred beneficed clergymen: and yet this is a certain truth. And 'tis as certain that the *paucity* of clergymen has been a great obstruction to the *conversion of the natives*, and a great occasion of the multiplying of sectaries. I have not ten parishes in the whole diocese endowed with glebes, and not six of them that clergymen can live on. I drew out a state of this diocese, and laid it before the convocation, who were not pleased with it, because, as they said, it too much discovered their nakedness: to which I only replied, that the sick man, who conceals his distemper from his physician, can never expect a cure.”

Patronage was then, as always, conferred upon those who might by “solemn and pathetic” exhortation awe people into a service of English interest, forgetful of God's kingdom or the minister's vows. Bishop Boulter is an instance. A biographical sketch of him will be found in the second volume of Mant. He was an open, political preacher, and told his Master's business without wincing. Hear him:—

“It was *purely* in obedience to his Majesty's pleasure that I came hither; and, now I am here, the *only* thing that can make me uneasy is, if I should not be enabled to carry on his Majesty's service here, the prospect of doing which is the *greatest comfort* I have in my present station.”

Surely, hindered by such and many far more injudicious and sinful influences, God's movement could make little way; while the Church, in consequence, would be only assisted to ruin, unless He himself specially raised an intervening barrier. Absentees robbed us—melting

the riches of the Church upon themselves. The pressing wants of Ireland for Reformation were decried during a general and unworthy selfishness. Zeal in the true cause of Christ was not even countenanced! What on earth could then so deludingly lead a man to hope that in the face of such and so many terrible obstacles the Irish could be converted? They knew nothing of any religion, and easily clung to the mechanism of Rome. No decided effort was made to teach the nation the truths of one faith or the errors of the other, and it would be a singular phenomenon in natural capability if they discovered these things of themselves. What facts I have narrated trace the cause and show the effect. One was as revolting as the other was deplorable.

Famine in Ireland greeted the second George to his father's throne, in 1727. Emigration by thousands followed. As is now the case, the Church and State were accused by the Romanist agitators as being accessories to the awful visitation of Providence! Their wily priests saw nothing of God's anger against themselves in this calamity, or, if they saw it, were wisely silent about it.

The baneful influence of English nominations to Irish sees and Church dignities, without any consideration short of interested state motives, was not abated yet.

"This principle," says Mant (ii. 5, 6, 7,) "and the extent to which it was carried, is broadly stated by Dean Swift, whose testimony, being that of a partisan on the other side, should be received with caution; yet I am not aware of any evidence to controvert or invalidate the position concerning the clergy, 'from the highest prelate to the lowest vicar;' namely, that 'there were hardly ten clergymen throughout the whole kingdom, for more than nineteen years preceding 1733, who had not been either preferred entirely upon account of their declared affection to the Hanover line, or higher promoted as the due reward of the same merit.'"

So utterly inattentive to the true interests of the Church, indeed, were the rulers, that Clayton, whose religious principles were averse to those of the Church, was elevated to a bishopric, and performed its offices, until he boasted of his errors in Parliament, actually imagining

that they had helped him to a mitre ! Even Boulter became moved at the perpetual abuses he witnessed. He really felt the absolute inoperativeness of an established Church, with "substitute ministers" struggling against pauperism, and officiating in churches so ruined as to frighten those who ventured to travel from afar off to the service in them. Having been roused himself, he was desirous to stimulate others, and thus told to his Grace of Newcastle how overclouded was the prospect of the movement in Ireland :—

" Until we can get more churches and resident clergy, instead of getting ground of the Papists, we must lose to them, as in fact we do in most places, *the descendants of many of Cromwell's officers and soldiers being gone off to Popery.*"

One cannot peruse the forlorn but intelligible state of the Reformation movement during all this time, without grievous apprehensions as to the result. The formularies of the Church were suffered to grow musty in the land, and the pulpits to be unused. In short, the Church's divine mission was forgotten or restricted, while an unweary and subtle foe, with little ado, welcomed to her meshes all those who were born within truth, but abandoned to error in their growth. Could other product be expected ? It is only amazing that it was so trifling.

Perhaps the anomalies which troubled the Church at that time, may have justified the passing of a bill, to exempt certain " tythe calls," thereby more weightily impoverishing those clergy who officiated as proxies. It was passed, we are told, well meaningly ; but it operated foully. In the year 1733, was also passed the *agestment* vote, " against tythe of pasture for dry cattle," upon the erroneous grounds that it was a novel claim. This enactment had to be followed by another dangerous one, designed to meet the injury the first had created. As on former occasions, from a similar pressure, and with a like destructive tendency, several parishes were merged into one, and a proportionate reduction in the working clergy became consequent. Adding the evils such a deficiency in clerical labour must have entailed, with

those we know already to have existed, there is no difficulty in accounting for the "descendants of Cromwell" becoming Romanists, or for Romanists remaining as they were. Class became identified with its antagonistic class, because of distinction ceasing in the absence of regular instruction. Protestants intermarried with their Romish neighbours, and in need of places of worship more in accordance with their feelings, they were satisfied, by degrees, to "move on to mass" with the rest of the people. When, therefore, three or four years might have passed, and the rector or his proxies could have visited his vast parish in one part, his little flock was lapsed into darkness, and forgot him in the other; while he reminded the people of one district of their departure from the faith, and they told him how far better to be *anything* than *nothing*, those with whom he had last been would grow weary of his absence, and likewise accompany their neighbours into the "chapels," of which there was no scarcity. So on, interminably, through a sheer want of something better, Protestants fell off, and Romanists remained as they were.

This mischief to the good cause and to the Church, was generally the result of the part taken by legislators. Undeviatingly they then pursued that same destructive course. While doing so, they higgled and cramped every exertion in the great cause of Reformation, too oft with a weak design to propitiate grumblers. Needing recovery from a very shameful and culpable torpor, the Church could not possibly effect an extension of God's everlasting truth until the trammels were removed.

Rome, meanwhile, was not inactive, though less irritating than might have been expected. With that serene intrepidity which distinguishes her when "all fish fly to her net" without a contrary drag, she looked on complacently. Danger not abroad to her system, but the depravity of the time favouring it, she was cool and calculating, but resolved to spring at a fitting occasion. Notwithstanding her apparent imperturbability in such times, she might, in a moment, take a violently querulous fit. Like a peevish prude, she may fight dignifiedly with

some puerile, imaginary offence—any trifle would do for a *casus belli*. While Bedford was Viceroy she got one, in demanding the repeal of a tax named *quarterage*, levied exclusively upon her “sons.” To further her end—would that Protestants were so united for their cause—she mustered a society called a “Catholic Committee,” headed by her prelates, and filled with her wealthy members. As generally occurs, after the formation of any new Romish society, an illegal sect originated in it. The present emanation of this sort was designated “*Whiteboys*,” with most mischievous designs, openly hostile to King and laws. A fruitless and absurd French invasion having taken place, they scattered, tired of themselves and their doings.

Happily I can advert to a noble missionary of those times, the respected John Wesley. Enough existed within itself to desecrate our Church, to counteract and neutralise its desire—for it did wish—to spread Gospel knowledge. The good and unwearied Wesley withstood the general tardiness, and showed how much our rulers were to blame. Gladly would I, if space permitted, dwell on the wonderful labours of that bright ornament of his day. I reluctantly pass on through scenes speaking loudly of him, to his preaching in Ireland in 1747. Some extracts are subjoined from his seventh journal, as I find them in Gillie’s *Historical Collections* (c. viii. p. 450). They are disjointed, but appear sufficiently explicit about the man and his work:—

“Dublin, August 10th, 1747.—I met the society at five, and at six preached on “Repent, and believe the Gospel.” The room, large as it was, would not contain the people, who all seemed to taste the good word.

“Thursday, 13th.—I continued preaching, morning and evening, and had more and more reason to hope they would not all be unfruitful hearers. Sunday, March 13th, 1748, my brother preached. Monday, 14th, I began preaching at five in the morning, a new thing here.

“Friday, 25th.—I preached in Marlborough-street, at five, to the largest congregation I have yet seen in a morning. At two, I began in Ship-street, where were many of the rich and genteel. I was exceedingly weak in body, having been examining

classes all day ; but I felt it not after I had spoke two sentences. I was stenghtened both in body and soul. Wednesday, 30th, I rode to Philipstown, the shiretown of the King's County. I was obliged to go into the street, which was soon filled with those who flocked from every side, to whom I declared 'Jesus Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.'

"Thursday, 31st.—One would have dissuaded me from preaching at five, being sure none would rise so soon ; but I kept my hour, and had a large and serious congregation. After preaching, I spoke severally to those of the society, of whom forty were troopers.

"Sunday, 3rd April.—I preached at Athlone ; many coming from all the country round, and (for the present) receiving the Word with joy. I preached again at six, in the same place, and to nearly the same (or a little larger) congregation ; the greater part whereof (notwithstanding the prohibition of their priests), I afterwards found were Papists.

"Monday, 4th.—I preached at five ; great part of the congregation was in tears. Indeed almost all the town appeared to be moved full of good will and desirous of salvation.

"Tuesday, 5th.—Our room was filled at five ; after preaching, I examined the classes. When I asked one in particular, 'How he had lived in time past?' he spread out his hands and said, with many tears, 'Here I stand, a grey-headed monster of all manner of wickedness.' Much in the same manner spoke one who had come from Connaught, but with great affliction. We determined to 'wrestle' with God in her behalf, which we did for above an hour ; and HE heard our prayer ; so that her soul was filled with joy unspeakable.

"Wednesday, 6th.—I baptized seven persons educated among the Quakers. At Tullamore, in the evening, well nigh all the town, rich and poor, were gathered together. I used great plainness of speech in applying those words, 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' The next day I preached at five, to a large and serious congregation. Between one and two, I preached at Clara, and then rode to Athlone, where I preached at six, on 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and after that to enter into His glory.' As yet none of this people even seems to oppose the truth.

"Monday, 11th.—At Athlone, in the evening, there appeared more emotion in the congregation than ever I have seen before ; but it was in a manner I ever saw, not in one here and there, but in all.

"Wednesday, 13th.—I preached in the evening at Tyrrel's-pass. The congregation here also was larger than ever ; and the Word of God seemed to take deeper root here than in any other part of this country. Saturday, 16th.—At Dublin I found

great reason to praise God for the work wrought among the people in my absence ; but still there is no such work as I look for. I see nothing yet but drops before a shower. Wednesday, 20th.—I spent an agreeable hour with Mr. Miller, the Lutheran minister. From him I learned, that the earnest religion which I found in so many parts of Germany, is but of late date, having taken its rise from one man, August Herman Frank ! So can God, if it pleaseth Him, enable one man to revive His work throughout a whole nation.

“ Sunday, 24th.—I preached at Skinner’s-alley, at five, and at Oxmantown-green, at eight. I was weak in body, but was greatly revived by the seriousness and earnestness of the congregation. Saturday, 30th.—At Athlone, some Papists, and two or three Protestant families were cordially joined together to oppose the work of God ; but they durst not yet do it openly, the stream running so strong against them.

“ Sunday, May 7th.—At five (in Athlone), I had great numbers of the poor Papists (as well as Protestants), maugre all the labours of their priests. I called aloud, ‘ Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money ! ’ Strange news to them ! One of whom had declared frankly but a few days before, ‘ *I would fain be with you, but I dare not ; for now I have all my sins forgiven for four shillings a-year, and this could not be in your Church !* ’ We had a triumphant hour when the society met. Several captives were set at liberty ; one of these was Mr. Joseph Ch——. He had been an eminent man many years for cursing, swearing, drinking, and all kinds of fashionable wickedness. On Monday last, he rode fifteen miles to Tyrrel’s-pass, and came thither before five in the morning.

“ Limerick, May 14th.—In the evening I preached to a numerous congregation, on—‘ If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.’

“ Monday, 29th.—I set out for Cork, we stopped a while at Kildorrery, in the afternoon, and took the opportunity of speaking closely to every one that understood English, and of giving them a few books. What a nation is this ! Not a man, woman, or child (except a few of the great vulgar), not only patiently, but gladly suffer the word of exhortation. Between six and seven, we reached Rathcormack. Tuesday, 30th.—I preached at eleven, and the hearts of the people seemed to be as melting wax.

“ Saturday, 17th June.—At Athlone, in the evening, I preached in our new-built house. Towards the close of the sermon, I asked, Which of you will give yourself, soul and body, to God ? One cried out, with a cry that almost shook the house, ‘ I will, I will.’ And as soon as able to stand, came forth in the midst to witness it before all the congregation ; these words pierced like lightning. Presently another witnessed the same resolution.

And, not long after, one who had been sorrowing, as without hope, received comfort and continued praising God. Perceiving this was an acceptable time, I laid aside my design of meeting the society, and continued in prayer with the whole congregation, all our hearts being as the heart of one man."

What a pleasing relief from the tedious description of sorrowful and scarce-interrupted transitions, hurtful conflicts, and a variety of Church disorders! Have you read these missionary exertions, this anxiety, energy, and success, and failed to understand why the Irish have been so long and resignedly Romanists? Have you observed the prolonged inaction of a Church, span-celled by State intrigues, and not discovered how easily and reasonably the Irish peasants became prone to a system, which so meetly harmonises with the dulness of human nature, as Rome's? Perhaps the best commentary that could be penned upon the facts which I have detailed, as having occurred in the time elapsed since the Reformation, may be far inferior to that which I should hope they themselves will suggest to a reflecting and impartial reader's mind. As the evil increased in vigour, measures to resist it declined in a similar ratio.

George III. succeeded his grandsire in 1760. He was an amiable, good monarch, and a noble son, whose reign was long and prosperous in the land which the Lord gave him. An insubordinate off-shoot of Roman influence and teaching, called "*Oakboys*," infested Munster at the commencement of this reign. They were soon suppressed. George was particularly, but reservedly, indulgent to his Roman Catholic subjects. He extended favour to their clergy, who swore not to abuse it, and certain other immunities, which their lassitude, assuming the aspect of quiet, and the principles of the constitution, warranted. The calm vanished. Immoderate zeal, created by falsely reckoning upon the favourable views of the King, urged the Romanists of the south, about 1786, under the title of "*Rightboys*," to wage war against parsons and tithes. Their doings were outrageously lawless, but cautiously planned. Nothing in fairness would be submitted to by them. Fierce and

thoughtless, they detested the Church, and carried their malignity to such a pitch, as to cause the passing of a special act for their suppression. The many other political events arising from religious discord, which number chapters in the annals of this reign, I shall pass over, as I presume few are unacquainted with them : not so much from their recency, as that many pens, fully adequate to the task, have been engaged in their narration. Many of them, such as the rebellion of 1798, develop the vassalage of the Irish peasantry to their priesthood. All show how the least pleasing homage of Irishmen to their spiritual rulers was made absolute and acceptable through superstition : if the man were irresolute, that magic wand was applied to his dark fears, and he lost himself. Were he insincere, the same mastery confronted and stunned him. A *scapular*—a mere bit of cloth “blessed” by a priest, and artfully made up of *asbestos*, by which it resists fire—has been known to *steady* the bravest amongst them, if held out while he was undecided. Few have had fortitude enough to cast by the little “holy baubles,” and fewer still to brave the priest’s curse. This affinity to childishness admits of explanation, and I believe the subsequent pages will give it. I will not refer to the atrocities of the hateful rebellion of “’98,” whereat such deceptive, yet unbroken, bonds as these tied the honest peasantry to their unholy cause. In that sanguinary contest, fought—marshalled in the ranks of Rome—many a noble heart, hostile to her rule and system, but terribly deluded by her seductive voice, which seldom means what it says. Its history is written in the blood of innocence, and heard in the dying groans of tortured thousands. But, like all the other frightful revolts, craftily instigated and blessed by Rome, it was cursed by heaven, and failed. It taught a lesson now little regarded.

I will go back some threescore years before this well-hatched wickedness kindled into a blaze, for a few useful facts, which I collect from a “Report of the Committee of the House of Lords,” published in Dublin in 1731. The facts therein narrated, quoted by the

learned John Lockman, show with what facility the fort may be entered while the heralds are quietly asleep. In defiance of the laws, vast numbers of moody ecclesiastics flocked hither. Several convents had been hurriedly opened by Jesuits, monks, and friars. Then, as now, new and pompous Romish chapels were erected in the most conspicuous parts of our cities, where none before were built. So numerous had the vagrant priests swarmed to Ireland, that, says the report, "the very Papists themselves complained of their burthen."

Nevertheless, Protestantism was in the ascent, as is proved by a little book, called "God's Goodness Manifest;" and its effects tended greatly to the civilisation of those people who had grown accustomed to rove unsettled through the mountains and woods, and live by depredation, or exciting people to rebel. The tyrannic oppression of Irish chieftainship gradually dwindled away, because the leaders of several clans became Protestants. The lowest classes were chiefly those who exhibited an aversion to English customs, and so to Reformation, which, by their priests, was represented as identical with Englishism. Were Protestant schools then established, and the Bible-lessons disseminated, no one can doubt that inestimable benefits would accrue to the country. Were the mist of ignorance dispelled, we would have been spared the pain of adverting to the cruelties of the rebellions which soon after sprung up. Were the Church then employed, Rome would have fallen in Ireland.

Six years prior to the unfeeling outbreak of "'98," an admirable society was instituted for "*Discountenancing Vice, and Promoting the Knowledge and Practice of the Christian Religion.*" It received a parliamentary sanction in 1800. The principles of this society, framed at a time a diabolical conspiracy was imbanding large numbers of Irishmen in an unholy cause, are not unlike those of the London "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." By parliamentary grants it was enabled to circulate largely the Word of God, and tracts of Christian utility. I believe the society yet exists.

In 1795, just three years before the "rebellion," an Irish parliament established Maynooth College, foolishly speculating upon appeasing for ever Romish murmurings. Many an honest legislator felt ashamed, by an intuitive perception, of the utter inapplicability of such a policy. It was, however, perfected. And we who now live know full well, that wrath and resentment, neither in depth or intensity, were averted or diminished by this "conciliating step."

The transactions of the secret society called "United Irishmen," are familiar to every one acquainted with modern history. The blasting effect of its explosion already alluded to, diffused an enmity, yet unextinguished, through the veins of many Irish families; but it rendered Romish factions less prevailing, if not less seditious. Like all Rome's devised rebellions, full of popular treachery, cunning, and ferocity, its vastness was ephemeral, and its overthrow signal.

Richard Powel, afterwards rector of Dundrum, established, in 1786, the first Sunday-school which was settled in Dublin, or in Ireland. The school was established in St. Catherine's parish, of which Mr. Powel was then curate. Better than 400 children, of all denominations, attended, and, with the ordinary courses of education, cheerfully accepted the study of holy Scripture. Many influential persons gave gratuitous aid to the fund for carrying out this worthy undertaking, so that the produce of one charity sermon added thereto was deemed sufficient for its maintenance. Mr. E. Bewley, one of the respectable Quakers inhabiting the parish, took, with several others of his community, an active and meritorious part in the management and support of these schools. By his exertions a building, to meet the increased demand for accommodation, was completed in 1798—the year of "the rebellion." The building was rapidly, ingeniously, plainly, and tastefully erected, in School-street, in St. Catherine's parish. Until the March of 1811, children were admitted only on Sundays; after that date its benefits were extended daily. The plan of conducting these schools discountenanced direct

polemical discussion. But the reading of Scripture, strictly encouraged, was permitted to produce its own effects. Industry, cleanliness, decency, and the other accompaniments of such an education, evidenced themselves prominently in the children. The gross number so instructed, from the foundation of the schools to the year 1814, was 24,361; and the class-rolls contained 578 names in the year 1818. The daily attendance, for several years after the opening of the daily schools, was, on an average, no less than 796. The scholars were from the poorest families. Within the last few years *School-street Schools* have ceased operations.

It is but mere justice to notice the usefulness and Christian energy of the Wesleyan body, fully developed in that precarious position which papal folly had made Ireland's in '98. Dr. Coke planned a mission, especially designed for the Irish-speaking people, which was set on foot in 1799. In the same year the zealous Graham, and the self-sacrificing Ouseley, went forth, buffeting scorn and danger, to tell the saving truths of Jesus to the neglected Irish. Were I to relate, largely, the many deeply interesting missionary adventures, particularly of Ouseley, I would leave little room for other matter in my assigned limits. I shall, however, have frequent occasion to advert to the labours now so happily set on foot by this active body.

CHAPTER VIII.

(FROM THE YEAR 1800 TO 1827.)

MISSIONARY MOVEMENT—OPENING ORGANISATIONS—
A BARRIER BROKEN.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."—*Luke*, iv. 18.

FIFTEEN centuries have been buried in the tomb of time since the saving truths of Christianity were first announced to the Irish nation. So long as these truths preserved the sacred purity of parental precepts, they tended to promote the national health, wealth, serenity, and contentment of our venerated land. But no sooner did they degenerate into the selfish and corrupt decretals of spiritual despotism, than they preyed upon the fruitfulness of our country, and produced repining discontent, envy, prayerlessness, superstition, infidelity, and national demolition. The pernicious influences attending this miserable transition from true to false religion are shown, I believe, in the previous pages. No ordinary mind can fail to satisfy itself, that the deplorable facts related lead directly to the cause which disqualified our nation from pursuing its ordinary duties, and accelerated it to the worst state of ruin. Opportunities did present themselves not unfrequently, which may, if duly embraced, enable the goodly inclined to subdue the intensity of the evil, and, ultimately, the evil itself. By a marvellous dilatoriness and an inexplicable stupidity, these favourable occasions were not only not profited by,

but too often made to subserve the evil's use. The facts narrated as having occurred since the first Reformation reveal of themselves the extent and culpability of this amazing indifference. With the dawn of the nineteenth century, however, a new era, invested with peculiar charms, was opened. To depict consecutively the interesting aspects of that new movement, which re-animates our Church, is the delightful task now before me. May God render the performance in some sort suited to the glorious subject!

An important bill, by which the union of England and Ireland was, at least in name, perfected, became law the first year of the nineteenth century. Were the spirit long since instilled in Irish politics under less expert trainers than Romish sacerdotal agitators, this bill would at once be appreciated, and its advantages not be so precarious as they have been. To the interests of Reformation it contributed little or nothing; therefore I have to pass it by.

Six years after "the Union," a Society, framed on the plan of the "British and Foreign Bible Society," started into existence, with the noble purpose of extending the use of God's Word in the country. It was entitled "*The Hibernian Bible Society*," and still steadily pursues its blessed course. Its projectors succeeded in publishing a complete version of the Bible in the Irish character, as well as one in an English dress. Gradually increasing, and contending against fearful obstacles, it went on its holy way; and at the last meeting of its friends, in the March of the present year, the cheering fact was announced, that almost a million Bibles, Testaments, and Portions of the Sacred Volume, had been circulated amongst the Irish by its exertions. The expenditure, from its foundation to last March, has been little short of two hundred thousand pounds. Its operations are principally effected through the agency of colporteurs, twenty-three of whom it at present employs to sell at a reduced price the Holy Scriptures.

The Roman Catholics, having little else to do, prepared an organisation which became after the "Union" espe-

cially active. It purposed to emancipate Romanists from an imaginary bondage, which emancipation was, in fact, sure to consign them more effectually to sacerdotal sway.

While agitation for the obtaining of an Act so inappropriately called "Emancipation," grew "more strong than budding," in 1809, the "*Sunday School Society for Ireland*" was established. This society, regarding the only real freedom of mortals, sought, by a holy agitation, to increase and render efficient Sunday schools, for the honour and glory of God, and the benefit of man's eternal interest. It sent forth visiting agents who communicated with the schools in their district; and it made extensive grants of Bibles, Testaments, and several other books of a similar tendency. Like every society which arose amidst desperate discord on the one hand, and faithless apathy on the other, many dangers and discouragements beset its infant path. Nevertheless, its holy character soon developed itself; and if it did not undeceive Romanists as to their errors, it prevented insolent opposition, and diffused a spirit of decency and decorum in its vicinity. By its exertions Protestants obtained a much needed intimacy with God's unerring Word; many Romanists participated in the same instruction, without, however, being able to detect thoroughly how it exposed Romanism, of which, in truth, they knew little, except by long-rooted prejudice. By this society God's Word was taught without direct reference to Rome's errors. The first year of its existence saw eighty schools in the enjoyment of the privileges it thus afforded. So steadily great became the increase up to January last, that instead of eighty, it now has in connexion with it 3,004 Sunday-schools, to which flock better than 200,000 scholars, instructed by nearly 20,000 gratuitous teachers. Of these schools the smallest share is in Connaught, and the largest in Ulster. It may be just to observe, that a considerable number of these scholars are unable to avail themselves of week-day instruction, and many rest altogether content with what information they can gather at the Sunday-school, without which they would have had none, or what is worse than none, such as would be poisonous.

The experiment of the "*School-street Schools*," already described, proving successful, its plan of operations was extended, in 1811, by the friends of Scriptural education. A society was then formed "*for promoting the education of the poor in Ireland*." A central committee, full of piety and zeal, drew up its principles, which embraced a perfectly united and well-directed system of education. This institution is generally known as the "*Kildare-place Society*." It was to be thoroughly Scriptural; the Bible being alone the true repository of the precepts of Christianity. Pupils were admitted "uninfluenced by religious distinctions." Books of religious controversy "were excluded therefrom." Perhaps at the time such was a judicious policy. The third fundamental principle committed "the sacred Scriptures without note or comment to all who have attained a suitable proficiency in reading." By an intelligible diffidence, the clerical body first coldly countenanced its progress; but when Government, considering its principles worth fostering, recommended it to Parliament, in 1816, as deserving of national support, the clergy then at once looked favouringly towards it. This, of course, widened the extent of its operations, and in about three years 241 schools were under its protection. In four years more these increased to 1,122. A grant of £5,538 was given to the society in 1819; it being distinctly understood, that "no attempt should be made to influence or disturb" the peculiar tenets of any sect or description of Christians. From "*A Review of Education in Ireland*"—an admirable pamphlet by Rev. H. Robinson, A.B., published by M^cGlashan, in 1850—I condense the following facts and comments upon this movement:—

"In 1824 the schools amounted to 1,140, a number sufficient to demonstrate the general approbation with which the system was received. In that year the fruit of its zealous efforts in diffusing a Scriptural education became conspicuously manifold, a disposition to embrace the faith of the Church being extensively displayed among Roman Catholics. The movement was chiefly exhibited in the county of Cavan, but its influence was extended more or less through every province, and almost through every county in Ireland. Why did it so soon pass away? Because it struck with

apprehension and alarm the clergy of that Church which the laity appeared so generally disposed to abandon. The Roman Catholic party were pressing on to political importance, with an ardent hope of success; the alarm for the stability of their Church gave to the politicians the strenuous support of the clergy. The Kildare-place Society, therefore, constituted a 'Catholic' grievance, and Government appointed a commission of inquiry into the subject, and enjoined it upon the society that its operations should be greatly limited, until the commission of inquiry should have finally reported on the subject of Irish education. The immediate effect of this step of the Government was to arrest the progress of education, by casting a doubt and uncertainty as to their future intentions, and to give fresh activity to every hostile exertion. The Roman Catholic scholars were immediately withdrawn from the schools by the most violent threats and denunciations; Roman Catholic priests were forced to withdraw their schools from connexion; opposition schools were opened for the temporary purpose of exhibiting to the Commissioners of Inquiry an apparent zeal in the cause of education, yet the returns of the Roman Catholic priests themselves admitted that more than one-half the scholars in the Kildare-place schools were, at that time, of the Roman Catholic persuasion. The commission of inquiry, as is well known, made several voluminous reports, containing a most valuable mass of information and evidence on the subject of education. The plan, however, which they proposed, utterly failed of success; they lost the co-operation of the most zealous friends of Scriptural education, while the Roman Catholic bishops unanimously resolved to withhold their countenance from any system of education, the effectual control over which should not be vested in them. The commissioners' plan was, therefore, finally abandoned."

The active operations of this Society were discontinued in 1830, Government having objected to them, at a time when it had 1,634 schools; on the class-rolls of which, as regular frequenters, were the names of 137,639 scholars. The narrowness of this society's resources have now reduced it to a position only able to uphold a model school in Dublin, and extend occasional aid to sinking schools in the country.

Succumbing to the Romish prelacy, Government established a system of education which was no more than a perpetuation of our rulers' maltreatment of everything designing to extend Reformation. The "National Board" grew into life as the offspring of a hallucinating

conciliation—a life which disowns the animating spirit of Christianity, and renounces that Book which points to an undying existence.

While the “Kildare-place Society” energetically urged forward the great cause of Scriptural education, and while its happy results were being manifested, in 1814 “*The Irish Evangelical Society*” was founded. Its chief objects were (as they are), the preaching of the Gospel to the Irish people. This good society was originated by the Congregationalists, with whom it is yet connected. Many causes rendered the obstacles to a permanent success of its labours very destructive. It went on favourably enough for a little time, sending its Irish-taught Scripture-readers to fairs, or other places where the peasantry congregated. Much good was often the immediate effect, but a durability to the work was wanted, because, probably, a season may pass by before the people could have again similar opportunities; many circumstances, therefore, interfered to obliterate the good impressions at first obtained, and they generally had to be made over again. The society’s exertions, however, added to the other incipients of Reformation. About a dozen itinerant preachers are at present supported by its funds, who principally labour in Ulster.

The secret of Irish disunion, and consequent miseries, was, after “the Union,” as little as ever investigated by legislators. Wrong courses, with evil results, still stigmatised the policy of English rulers towards Ireland. To conciliate the priesthood of Rome no species of administration was considered disreputable, however materially it damaged the cause of Reformation. The history of our Church, at the period whereof I am now writing, suggests little akin to the warm feelings which to-day actuate a considerable number of our ministers. The clergy, as a body, were inexcusably indolent, and, of course, the interests of Reformation, except in the cases referred to, were neglected. I am now, however, about to record the foundation of a society which roused the latent energy, and set the Reformation stone seriously rolling.

From the earliest dawn of Reformation in Ireland the most gigantic impediment was the blind avoidance of teaching its true religion to the Irish in their native language. There existed always such an aversion to England as produced an inordinate aversion to her language. So fondly attached to their native tongue were, and are, the real Irish, that it is an ascertained fact that they hold it as impossible to convey erroneous doctrines through the medium of so revered a language. The peculiarities of this fondness were festered instead of being fostered—they were made the handle of enmity instead of the channel of charity. By every incautious and ill-judged method the positive evil of abusing the language was enlarged—previously-disclosed facts prove how, and to what extent; such incidents as I may find it useful to write of subsequently, will further illustrate the same subject. Struck with the greatness of former neglect, and resolved, at all events, to check its flowing and flooded injuries to the Reformation cause and their common country, in 1816, several influential individuals formed themselves into a society in Dublin, which they named “*The Society for Promoting the Education of the Native Irish, through the Medium of their own Language.*” It primarily sought to teach the Scriptures in the native dialect, without distinctly meaning to proselytise. After having subdued the many obstacles to its establishment, it commenced operations under the most blessed prospects. This noble and valuable institute is long familiarly known as the IRISH SOCIETY. Its history is more or less interwoven with every event of Reformation from that date to this. I shall need, therefore, to digress repeatedly in detailing its operations, having first said something respecting its foundation.

It prudently confined its publications to the Scriptures and Book of Common Prayer, first printed in Irish according to the Roman letter, but soon in the native character. Knowing full well that the intimacy thus opened with God’s revealed Truths leads inevitably to an abandonment of man’s traditions, it was resolved to have the society’s committee composed of men belonging to the

Established Church, thereby fully opening the door of Ireland's *National Church* to those who may be converted. When the people learned Scripture, and solely Scripture, they insensibly acquired an acquaintance with Truth in its plainest aspect. This knowledge was imparted in a manner then the most peculiarly applicable to the vigorous antipathies of the Irish—in a manner too long unused.

It would be out of the order of the human execution of any project, however momentous or holy, that it should escape during the primary steps in its foundation many unwitting mistakes. Those which injured the excellence and practical success of the *Irish Society* at first, though not few, were soon redressed, and then its operations became of telling importance. The few first years of the society's existence were spent almost entirely in the labour of construction and re-construction, as experience in the necessary requirements occasionally dictated.

I presume no one will question, in this age, the power and pathos of the Celtic vernacular. No compounded language can so beautifully express the sublimity of Scriptural sentiments. The Irish instinctively hugged with warmth, and only reluctantly could separate from, a dialect characteristically their own. I do not, however, purpose, for I assume there is no occasion, to defend it. If there be a desire, as there long has been, to render its use less prevalent, the best plan practicable seems to be that had recourse to by Dr. Wilson, in the Isle of Man—causing the Manx tongue to be generally taught he brought about its disuse. Teach or speak in Irish to any Irishman, and your creed and country are forgotten in the love he bears the native dialect. The studied disrespect to it was always a stupendous barrier to Reformation. Not only was it great as respects the enthusiastic love of language in its bare sense, but also because in places where the English was *well known* that alien language was detested, and the Scriptures in it denounced and avoided, as containing “soul-stinging wasps.” However, in the face of powerful enmity, and some well-meant opposition, the Irish Society set about crushing the long-living obstacles.

An octavo volume of Boyle's Irish Bible, in the unobjectionable Irish type, was printed in 1821, by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and also a pocket edition, in the same character, by the Hibernian Bible Society, which materially served the purpose of the *Irish Society*. These editions were instantly stereotyped, and, after some little delay, which was the effect of over-caution, judiciously circulated. Previous to the granting of certain numbers of copies to the *Irish Society*, the institutions which published them, doubting the expediency of employing them as that society wished, requested the opinions of competent local judges. From several parts of Ireland testimonies, in reply, poured in, that there was not only a propriety in teaching through the medium of the native tongue, but an immediate necessity for such an attempt. From Kilkenny, Rev. P. Roe declared his preference of the Irish to all other languages, in order that he might meet the want to teach the people through it. Connaught, by her illustrious archbishop, spoke out with a loud voice for the necessity of the undertaking. Such pressing and unanimous solicitations could not long be resisted, and the grants were made and profited by. Internal difficulties did not rest here, but they were of inferior power, and soon frustrated. One of the new objections was touching a special version of the Scriptures. Here it is given and treated by Dr. Mason, in page 19 of his *History of the Irish Society* :—

“It was objected against the version, that it was corrupted. It is surprising how very general is the idea in England, that these Bibles of the two Bible Societies are translations newly made, whereas they are neither of them such. This mistake of version for edition, misled even the great critics of the *Quarterly Review*. It should, therefore, be particularly observed, that all the modern editions of the Irish Bible are but reprints of Mr. Boyle's 4to. of 1682-5, excepting in a few and very trifling particulars, partly taken from the original manuscript in Marsh's Library; or such as the substituting, for a few Anglicisms, Irish terms expressive of the same meaning, and used as such elsewhere in the same volume. There are but four material instances in which the Committee resolved unanimously, and upon deliberation, to correct the text of the version. These instances

are John, i. 42, and John, ii. 4, in which they restored, from a corrupted and Romish rendering which had been unaccountably permitted to supplant it, the original translation of Archbishop Daniel; the others were the change, in Rom. iii. 21, 22, and two other places, of an Irish term which properly signifies *justice*, to one more generally used in the Irish Scriptures to denote *righteousness*. The altered words and texts were uniformly subjoined in the minion, at the bottom of the respective pages, as various readings. But to these alterations no objections have ever been made; such therefore as were adduced upon this head apply equally to the originals, as they were put forth 150 years ago. It is sufficient to state, that these originals were the deliberate publication of persons, the most competent and trustworthy; and that they have endured the test of a century and a-half, both in Scotland and Ireland."

The first really prosperous operation of the *Irish Society* was set on foot in 1822. Acting upon the invitation of the Rev. Mr. Winning, of Kingscourt, in Cavan, the committee allowed nine teachers to be supported in his district. In the following year the subjoined *modus operandi*, which I copy from Dr. Mason's book, already quoted, was adopted and generally practised:—

"A proper person is, in the first instance, employed to seek for individuals in a particular district, who are competent to instruct in the primer of the Irish language; these are then engaged to teach their neighbours when and how they can, generally in the hours of relaxation from labour, and in the cabins of the peasantry; and they are furnished with elementary books and portions of the Scripture for the purpose. At the end of three or four months, an inspection by the person who engaged them, takes place; and the teachers are paid a sum, usually one shilling per head, for each pupil passing this inspection. The teaching of a pupil is generally completed within a year from his first commencing with a primer. There is a peculiarity in these schools, if so they may be called, which must be noticed, as residents in the country are often surprised to hear of such being reported to exist in their neighbourhood, and even in a flourishing state, while the fact of their existence is unknown to them. In truth, an Irish master teaches his scholars where and when he can find opportunity; and, to avoid exciting the opposition of the priest, the inspection is frequently obliged to be confined to one, two, or three scholars at a time, according as they can be induced to come, or are enabled to avoid suspicion—and seldom can they be inspected in a body at one fixed place;—while the establishment

has nothing of a school but the teacher and the name—no school-room, no tables, no benches, no apparatus, no regular collection of scholars. In order to avoid discovery, the little batch will be sometimes found behind the hay-stack or the turf-clamp, generally in some neighbour's cabin in the evening. It is quite needless to add, that all this must pass unobserved by any one who does not follow the proper mode of inquiry through the persons concerned."

The first teacher in Kingscourt was an honest peasant, named Riely, who, for the merest trifle in shape of temporal remuneration, zealously undertook to tell to others the beauties of Scripture as he found them in the Irish Bible. In the course of a year, the teachers increased to thirty-one, and the pupils to 266.

I must now pass on for a little while, from the labours thus so encouragingly set on foot, to notice kindred institutions, which meanwhile arose to help the good cause.

A society was formed in 1822, entitled the "*Scripture Readers' Society*," having for its object the employment of—

"Men of humble rank and approved piety, to read the Scriptures amongst the poor, from house to house. Being of the same grade with the persons amongst whom they move, they are most willingly admitted to houses where a Protestant minister could not so readily obtain access."

To "families and individuals" they were instructed to chiefly confine their visits. Those men so commissioned were both Irish and English speakers. At first, of either there were few; but, at present, of the sixty-eight employed throughout Ireland, twenty-seven are Irish-speaking men; of the sixty-eight, twelve are located in Connaught; twenty in Munster; the same number in Ulster; and in Leinster, sixteen. This society is one which merited far better support than it received, and was, and is, certainly no unimportant, though a very unostentatious, auxiliary in the Reformation cause.

A female school society, called "*The Ladies' Hibernian*," was founded the year following 1822. Several pious English ladies collected funds to a large amount, which

they nobly applied to the support of female schools, wherein the Scriptures would be read and got "off by heart." The scholars were also instructed in needlework and knitting. The influence of this mode of making known God's Word had an effect not felt until the larger and more avowed Reformation Societies stood forth proclaiming the purity of Gospel Christianity. In later years, suggestions relative to extending the branches taught were adopted, and proved very beneficial. In many miserable districts of Ireland this society has revived a long-interred happiness and comfort.

Besides these collective and truly laudable efforts, many individuals bore undauntedly the standard of Reformation through the districts over which they were respectively placed, and many Irishmen enrolled themselves as penitently returned to their forsaken Church. Every such exertion tended, in some degree, in its sphere, to brush away the dangers and obstacles that lay heaped in the path of the mightier efforts which then were making, and the others more mighty still which soon after followed. To them I must devote the remainder of my attention ; meantime, I purpose briefly recording every minor effort that I am aware of in the same field.

To return to the progress of Reformation, under the auspices of the *Irish Society*, I must direct attention again to Kingscourt, where the main operations were. In 1825, there were established fifty-one of the peculiar schools described, which were frequented by better than 900 pupils. Grey-haired men were encouraged to hope that even they would be spared to witness the fruits of these labours. At the annual meeting of 1826, some very interesting resolutions, passed at a meeting of the Kingscourt scholars, were presented by a deputation of the subscribers. To this document 375 signatures were voluntarily affixed. The address expressed, on the part of 5,000 adult men, in connexion with the society, the deepest sense of respect of that invaluable institution ; and the first resolution ran thus :—

" That, believing the sacred Scriptures to be the source of all

spiritual knowledge, and the proper basis of all moral instruction, we consider that the want of them in our native language has been, to us and our forefathers, for a long period, the greatest evil; and that the Irish Society, by their schools, and providing for us the Scriptures in the language we best understand, have given to us an inestimable gift, and to Ireland the noblest boon she ever before received."

Such a sentiment, with others equally significant, uttered by men yet nominally Romanists, had a very decided effect upon other portions of Ireland. Kerry produced a second Riely, in the person of a man named Dowling, and God blessed the extension of His Word with slow, yet wondrous success. The society operated quietly, but did not the less securely sow the good seed. No other mode would appear to be then practicable; the Bible was circulated and sought for, and very frequently the Prayer-book too. Both being studied led into "the Church."

The extent and promise of the work up to this time induced an auxiliary to start in London. From this worthy offspring great encouragement and sustenance has ever since been derived.

Agitation and persecution were then, as always, the only implements used by the papal priests to hold their footing. Of course the honest resolutions of the upright inhabitants of Kingscourt, which can be to this day shown in the *Irish Society* office, could not escape their vigilance. They saw them, and groaned in prophetic fear. Denunciations and persecution followed; the *Irish Society* and its principles were maligned and attacked; its favourers in part, cursed or censured; and those fully gained through it to the true Shepherd's fold, hunted from their fathers' home like dogs, and left not where to lay their heads, if they were left life to care. It told but triflingly, although so dreadful. The following year, the people resolved that they were justified, as *Roman Catholics*, to continue "reading the Scriptures." This they proved far too conclusively for the peace or satisfaction of the priests. Schools and scholars increased, regardless of priestly bans or persecutions. These successes were, however, confined to Kingscourt.

Before I pass on to another portion of the work then carried on, I think it right to say a little more about the Wesleyan preachers, who seemed undismayed by any persecutions. Mr. Bell, commenced preaching in 1800, as an Irish missionary, and merits being set down as such; he was zealous and faithful. Mr. Hamilton, nominated by Wesley himself to a circuit, devoted his career unceasingly to the same object. From a letter addressed by him to a friend, who has furnished me with an interesting tract of the Wesleyan missions, I take this extract:—

“I remember, that on the road one Sunday, near forty years ago, above Keady, the missionary spirit came upon me, and in a few minutes I had an opportunity of exercising it, by a crowd coming down the road. So I dismounted, and called them to the side of a turf stack, where I preached as well as I could. Next day, I got my black cap, and went to the market of Aughnacloy, and preached. I have been ten years on the Irish mission through all the kingdom; several times riding through fairs and markets, shouting, ‘*Come all of you here, come all of you here,*’ and sitting on my saddle, preached with delight: sometimes from, ‘The Devil has desired to have you;’ at other times, ‘Christ died for the ungodly;’ but chiefly, ‘Cease to do evil, learn to do well.’ I never slept sounder than after a day’s work of this kind. I often had to endure cruel mockings, with many a *honomondhoul*, ‘your soul to the devil,’ and stones flying; but I watched as well as prayed, and still escaped wonderfully. When up the country (the south), I was in most danger, and had to get license, and carry arms for my defence, after being waylaid by a crowd of Papists in a lonely place, who started up on all sides and cried, ‘Deliver!’ By a strong horse, and good spurs, I made my way through them; but they beat Ouseley greatly. In the county of Mayo, our lodgings were not good. The little kitchen was the cow-house, preaching-house, dining-room, and sometimes the bed-chamber, and all. . . . But the conversion of S——B—— and his mother, and many more of the Papists, made up for all the trouble.

“P.S.—J. F——, intending to be a priest, I met in ——, put a little book into his hand—‘*Alleine’s Alarm.*’ God opened his eyes, and he is now a clergyman in the Church in ——, and the fruit of the mission.”

Cotemporary with this deserving servant of the cause and of the same society, was Mr. C. Graham. The fol-

lowing note respecting him appears in the tract already alluded to :—

“ At a watchnight in Gorey, he published that the Rev. Chas. Mayne would preach in the street the next market-day. The time arrived, but the mob yelled, and showed a disposition to stone the preacher. Not being able to proceed, that excellent and amiable minister, addressing them, said, ‘ If you keep quiet, I’ll preach ;’ but all in vain. Here Mr. Graham stood up, and stretching out his hand, cried with stentorian voice, ‘ Mark him that throws !’ He then gave them a pointed and energetic exhortation on the fall of man ; the desperate wickedness of the human heart ; and the necessity of repentance, and turning to God through Christ ; to which they listened with patient attention. Afterwards addressing a friend who accompanied him through the street, Mr. Graham said, ‘ Mark my words, A—— : good will result from this meeting.’ And it was so : a man was convinced of sin, and soon after converted, who, by the help of God, continues to this day. A class is now met in his house.”

Gideon Ouseley, who joined the Wesleyan body, and would be a valuable acquisition to any Christian society, was one of the most devotedly pious men of his day. A friend who often travelled with him in his holy excursions, and watched his departing spirit when about to join its God, related to me some deeply interesting circumstances connected with his good career. Space alone forbids me detailing them, as I had fully intended to do. Few had a more ardent love of Jesus. Few, therefore, were better prepared than the self-sacrificing Ouseley, to do the work of Him whom he constantly and fondly called, “ my Master, and my blessed Master.” Attached to Jesus so warmly, the love for his fellow-sinners in general must have been great, greater still that for his countrymen. He was perfect master of the Irish language, and made the utmost use of his knowledge. He preached, prayed, and sung in the venerated tongue of the Celt. Here is an admirable description by one intimate with the faithful being described. This affectionate memorial was published in a Dublin paper soon after the demise of him of whom it speaks :—

“ Gideon Ouseley, the venerable and zealous minister of the

Gospel, died in this city, after an illness of short duration, on Tuesday, the 14th instant, in the 78th year of his age. During forty-seven years he was ceaselessly engaged in the arduous and important duties of his sacred mission. He was universally known, beloved, and respected by Christians of every denomination. The announcement of his death will cause many hearts to mourn.

“ His first religious impressions were produced in the year 1791, by the careful perusal of the Holy Scriptures. He has often mentioned Young's works—the ‘ Night Thoughts,’ especially his ‘ Infidel Reclaimed,’ and ‘ The Centaur not Fabulous,’ as singularly beneficial to him at that period.

“ Soon after he experienced the salutary influence of Christian truth, he became deeply impressed with the feeling, that it was his duty to interest himself in the promotion of the spiritual good of others. Accordingly in the year 1792 he commenced his career as an out-door preacher. His first address was delivered in a churchyard at a funeral, to a vast multitude assembled on the occasion. From thenceforward, in the fairs and markets, towns and villages, he read the holy Scriptures, and enforced divine truth with persuasive energy. He generally, when preaching in the open air, availed himself of his intimate knowledge of the Irish language, to engage attention and instruct his hearers in Divine truth, through the medium of a well-understood and favourite dialect. Numberless instances might be adduced, and persons named, who, through the blessing of God upon his persevering exertions, have been savingly converted from the soul-destroying popish heresy, to the truth as it is in Christ; and some of those persons are themselves at present engaged in the ministry of the Gospel in the Established and other Protestant churches.

“ During the course of his long and arduous career as a Christian missionary, he encountered, without dismay, difficulties of no ordinary description. To him might be applied, with truth, the Apostle Paul's description of himself—‘ In labours abundant, in deaths oft, in journeyings often, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils in the city, in perils in the country : but none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.’ Instances without number might be cited of his courage and fortitude, and of the meekness and patience with which he endured sufferings. On one occasion, some years since, while preaching in the town of Loughrea, in the county of Galway, he stood with his back to the wall which encloses the barrack ; the mob, instigated, it is said, by the priest,

began pelting him with stones ; but finding that this did not discompose him, they broke through the circle formed by the few friends who surrounded the chair on which he stood, and pulled him down. With difficulty he was got into the guard-room of the barrack, upon which the sergeant caused the gate to be closed. The mob, thus disappointed, became outrageous, cast stones over the wall, and threatened to pull down the barrack, if the preacher were not given to them. The officer of the day was applied to, and he informed Mr. Ouseley that he feared it would, under the circumstances, be contrary to his duty to permit him to remain. Mr. Ouseley, supposing that it would involve a breach of military discipline to shelter him, replied that he would go forth, assured that the God whom he served would save him from the power of his enemies. The officer, however, thought it best to consult the officer in command of the regiment, upon whose authority he ordered the men to arms, and then addressed the mob with effect, and caused them to disperse. On another occasion, while preaching in the streets of Monaghan, a Romanist got so near Mr. Ouseley as to spit full in his face ; some of those present interfered, and were laying hold of the assailant, when Mr. Ouseley, who had by this time wiped his face, interposed and excused the man, and begged that he might be allowed to remain to hear what he had to say. On another occasion, while preaching in the street of Tuam, he had two of his teeth knocked out by a severe blow from a piece of hard turf thrown at him : he spit the teeth into his hand, and after a short pause proceeded with his discourse, without interruption, except occasionally to empty his mouth of blood.

“ So fully was Mr. Ouseley’s mind impressed with the solemn importance of the work in which he was engaged, and the vast value of the souls of men, that he could not be persuaded that all who wanted warning would be found to attend in any house to hear.

“ He, therefore, sought those who otherwise would not hear ; nor did he intermit this mode of preaching when rebellion raged in the country. Regardless of danger, and uninfluenced by the temporising prudence of cowardly professors, he affectionately and persuasively warned men to ‘flee from the wrath to come.’

“ His zeal was not limited to Ireland ; he frequently visited England and Scotland, and perhaps no preacher of the Gospel in modern times has been more abundantly successful : thousands were the crown of his rejoicing in the Lord. He travelled many thousand miles annually, and preached generally three sermons each day.

“ ‘ We fools counted his life madness.’

“He possessed a clear and comprehensive mind, stored with various learning, and improved by reading and close thinking ; but all his acquirements were brought to bear upon the great concerns of eternity ; his mode of address was simple, artless, and colloquial ; he studied plainness of speech, and often observed that, as the larger number in every congregation could best understand truth when plainly expressed—if they understood what was said, those of a higher order of mind were sure to understand. He deprecated a gaudy and pompous style of uttering religious truth, because hearers, instead of judging themselves, were judging of the speaker : and instead of admiring the Saviour, they admired the sermon, or were exposed to the temptation of doing so.

“His spirit was truly Catholic ; he was a stranger to sectarian asperity. To all, of every denomination, who love our Lord Jesus Christ, he was affectionately attached—not stumbling at non-essential peculiarities ; and although, as a preacher and an author, he waged an interminable warfare against the soul-destroying dogmas of Popery, and against the compact confederacy of its priesthood, by which the spiritual interests and civil liberties of mankind are treasured upon—yet, in his addresses to Roman Catholics, not one offensive word escaped his lips. He pitied them, because he believed they were deceived, and he patiently instructed them without wounding their prejudices.

“He was firm in his defence of truth—like a beaten anvil, he yielded not ; yet he was gentle and easily to be entreated. In his journeyings, he was necessarily thrown into society of all grades ; but whether with the rich or with the poor, his conduct and spirit were the same. He never forgot that he was a minister of God ; and, as such, it was his joy and delight to speak to every man in season and out of season, words by which they might be saved. Whether in the house, or whether in the street—in his hours of retirement, and in his public ministrations, he was constantly actuated by the same spirit. When he spoke, his conversation was in heaven ; and the hearts of his intense friends still burn within them, on every recollection of the gracious words that proceeded from his mouth.

“ ‘ To means of grace the last respect he show'd,
Nor sought new paths as wiser than his God :
Their sacred strength preserv'd him from extremes,
Of empty outside, or enthusiast dreams.’ ”

“To hoary age he continued his active and laborious services, doing the work of an evangelist ; within a few days of his confinement, by the affliction which terminated his valuable life, he preached in the town of Mountmellick, three times the same day ;

one service was in the open air. During the continuance of the affliction, although he suffered intense pain, no murmur of impatience escaped his lips ; on the contrary, he was enabled to praise God, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. In a word, the grace of God, and the promises of Holy Scripture, which he delighted to recommend to others, in life and in death, were the support and rejoicing of his own heart."

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CHAPTER IX.

(COMMENCING WITH THE YEAR 1827.)

DENATIONALISING NOTIONS—INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE—COLONISATION CONSTRAINED.

And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong.—These are the things that ye shall do: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.—*Zechariah*, viii. 13 and 16.

To enumerate the politico-historic incidents of the years succeeding the Union is not necessary for the purposes of my narrative. I have a “work” to describe more absorbing still; and one which, though it encountered all the opposing enmity of the political as well as peaceful priests, went on prosperously. I must, however, record this political fact:—In 1829, a success crowned the blatant brawlings of the so-called emancipators, which affected, for the better at least, neither the country’s interest nor concord. Were the practical results of that measure fairly investigated, I have no hesitation in saying, that it would be found to have tended greatly to diminish both. Those in reality emancipated, were the priests of Rome; that is to say, a legislative assent was given to their dominion over the people, and no Irishman can misunderstand what that means.

The religious feeling indulged in, to a lamentable degree at that period by Roman Catholics, as many yet living can testify, was practically proved to be utter superstition. I subjoin an account of some of the prevailing practices, without, however, any regard to the general

tendencies of that Church's doctrines:—Michaelmas had its *pooca* to fright or please; in most places, the warning wail of the non-existing *banshee* was considered with sacred awe; the *leprechaun* tended his meadow revels, and teased the ideas of many a wealth-wooer; imaginary diminutives, yclept *fairies*, of innumerable species, became household tyrants or venerated friends; *ghosts* were conjured up by the timidity of the midnight walker, and his tale of the apparition drew forth a fervent ejaculation of, "Mary, guard us!" God and His Christ were forgotten. His Sabbaths were welcomed to be desecrated by the card-player and the dancer—by the blasphemer and the drunkard. Sunday evening dances, the only afternoon worship in the country, were frequently productive of disgusting brawls, and always of less noisy though as evil doings. The place of dance-revel was generally a cross-road; cakes, with endless apocryphal emblems, rested on the top of a churn-staff—placed so as to escape enchantment—until the "likeliest" lad led out the "duckiest colleen," who then got and divided it, fabulous ornaments and all. Whiskey-drinking followed; the unrefined excitability of the Celt got up; and the *alpeens* always flew thick and fierce about the heads of the yelling revelers, ere the night's sport terminated. Here was Sunday desecration indeed! not that there was no devotion—alas! all thus engaged had, most probably, been at mass, and *seen Christ personally*. Hurling was another favourite pastime on Sabbath-day, after the supposed sacrifice had been celebrated. Though I am not over old, I well remember seeing the parish priest of Murroe standing on a wall, while a hurling-match was "coming off," quite delighted with such Sabbath-spending. These "recreations" mostly ended with skull-cracking; and many is the boy, "decent and cleanly," instigated by Satan to so abuse the Lord's Day, had to "go on his keeping" for months after the unfortunate "play;" many another never returned to his father's hearth unless a corpse. Shrove-tide and Easter had their kindred "amusements." Fairs were always identified with faction fights; mass-going with

the entire lot of fun, especially with drinking and match-making. Country public-houses did no business worth talking of unless on Sundays—so much so, that prosperity grew connected with the name of Sunday : a man observed doing well would be told it was “his Sunday.” Need I say a word about *wakes*, and the horrifying deeds occurring at them ? I dread to tell them ; they are monstrous almost to the last degree. *May-boys* luxuriated in their innocent mummeries, as did also *wren-boys* at their appointed time. St. John’s eve was greeted with bonfires to keep harm from the growing crops or thriving cattle, to which little ceremony priests’ masses were invariably added for the same intention. That luck might come of it St. Bridget had her *breedogue* on the first of February, and Candlemas-day its countless candles, as gifts to the “altar.” To guard against fire, houses had a certain small plant directly over the door, very often accompanied by a sod on a *kipeen*, to denote the possession of a “snug little drop of parliament under the rose.” I well remember seeing the calving-cow attended with the most solemn ceremony ; holy water sprinkled, blessed candles lighted, and prayers for her safe delivery offered to the Virgin ! I, even I, have observed pilgrimages to holy wells, and the holy wells themselves strewed around with heaps of rotten rags, the donations of visitors to the presiding deity. I, even I, remember attending masses offered for sick and dying cattle ; for the cleansing of houses wherein had been some malady ; for the purification of new abodes ; for the success of the growing crop of some well-paying farmer ! The priests who so offered what they call Jesus, the Son of Jehovah, are yet living, and, of course, yet trading in these offerings ! I, too, recollect hearing the chapel *devoteens*—the pink of parish Romanists—when observing any one excel in a particular department of their “Sunday amusements,” mutter “he is not right,” if a good-toned singer ; “*movouchil* has seen the May-eve piper,” if a clever dancer ; “he is pitched upon,” if gentle in his manners ; “a hearty fellow,” if uncouth and cursing ; “a sly slippery devil’s imp,” if

uninclined to participate in the “innocencies.” In short, every thing had a superstitious attribute or origin, quite opposed to Christianity, and which attributes are by some unfoundedly deemed national. They became so. There is now, blessed be God, another side to this very imperfectly sketched picture. We shall soon inspect it.

Reformation was gradually evoking hatred for these pernicious mummeries. The labourers already at work to effect their overthrow, had done much to that end. No member of the Roman Catholic community who had perused the Irish Bible, was found mixed up with these evil and idle doings. Did he desire it, in truth, the fact of being a Bible-reader thoroughly disqualified him in a double sense for societyship with revellers who loathed so “mean a fellow.” To the other “rites and ceremonies” his intimacy with God’s Word made himself heartily object. The Bible-reading converts consequently grew “clean and decent,” and it was thought, therefore, that they were bribed. The accusers quite forgot that the converts’ pockets were not emptied for masses, blessed candles, and for scores of other “holy” et ceteras; that no Sunday drinking extracted the best of their hard earnings; no gambling robbed their children; that they earned, and kept their earnings unsquandered: that they laboured the week through, and kept God’s Day holy—therefore they grew prosperous. These facts were totally lost sight of. Priests very naturally urged the necessity of persecuting the men who acted for the sake of conscience. But that book which taught the converts to deny the rightness of the evil doings described, pointed them to the true refuge of the afflicted, and they were satisfied to bear all for His sake.

Not only coteremporaneously with, but prior to the *Irish Society’s* movement at Kingscourt, a noble work had been piously begun, at Askeaton, in the county of Limerick. It was brought about by the untiring and well-directed efforts of one whose life the Almighty Father has yet preserved, the present truly good Dean of Ardagh—the Very Rev. Dr. Murray. No other pen than that of the illustrious Jebb, late Bishop of Limerick,

can adequately portray this labourer and his rich toil. To me it is particularly pleasing to be rescued by so worthy and able a detailer of facts, from the obviously delicate, though pleasing, task of relating upon my own authority the appended history of an all-absorbing exertion. I quote from Forster's *Life of Bishop Jebb*, vol. ii. p. 437. The faithful prelate was writing from Limerick, in the April of 1827, to Sir R. H. Inglis, Bart., M.P., and having informed him generally of the state of the movement, went on to say :—

“The chief agent, hitherto, has been Mr. Murray, Vicar of Askeaton; and I have particular satisfaction in and through him. He is a truly good man; mild and gentle, but with great firmness and perseverance; sincerely pious, competently informed, and indefatigably diligent, with the talent of acting powerfully on the minds of the people, by goodness, kindness, zeal, and an earnest and constant appeal to the Holy Scriptures. The occurrences at Askeaton are remarkable; the more so, as reformation had noiselessly commenced there, before it was dreamt of in the county of Cavan. This parish is in a wild part of the county of Limerick, in which the population is predominantly Roman Catholic. The late clergyman, though I believe a fairly respectable country gentleman, was not an attentive parish minister; in fact, the parishioners, I fear, had been much neglected. In the summer of 1824, on the death of the then incumbent, the patron (Sir Matthew Blackiston) appointed Mr. Murray to the living. In October 1824, he came to reside. He and Mrs. Murray (an excellent coadjutrix to her husband) happened to be intrusted with the disposal of £200 a-year for charitable purposes, especially the education of the poor; and thought it their duty to establish schools, without delay, in that neglected district. Three schools were, accordingly, formed; one under the patronage of the Kildare-place Society, and with a Protestant master; the other two, supported solely by Mr. Murray, and, to meet the prejudices of the people, with Roman Catholic masters. This was about January 1825. The priest, a violent, intemperate, but clever man, opposed these schools, and withdrew all the Roman Catholic children: the masters, also, from fear of the priest, withdrew. Mrs. Murray, then, established a female school in her own house; and, in the hope of softening down the opposition of the priest, went so far as to exclude the Scriptures.

“This concession, however, was unavailing: here, too, opposition early commenced, and the priest was in arms. But, now,

the people rebelled; their children were continued at school; and, in some cases, the adults requested to borrow the Scriptures, and other religious books. In June 1825, *two families* withdrew from the Church of Rome, and joined the Church of England, at Askeaton; this was the *beginning* of the Reformation there.

"Meantime, in a remoter part of the union under his care, at a police station, Mr. Murray performed service weekly, on a week-day, for the police constables, and a few scattered Protestants. Gradually, and quite of their own accord, Roman Catholics came to listen; then they came, voluntarily also, to Mr. Murray's house, for further instruction; and, lastly, attended service in the parish church.

"Conversions have since been progressive; and at this time, when I write, the converts at Askeaton are in number, from 160 to 170 adults, besides about 300 young persons and children. The children are instructed by the schoolmistress and Mrs. Murray. The adults are distributed into three classes.

"Mr. Murray meets each of these classes once a-week; and instructs them in the Old and New Testaments, with constant reference to the liturgy. He has also established an adult school, several of the attendants at which, who could not formerly read, now read well.

"The whole of this movement, I cannot but view as Providential. Mr. Murray was, at first, a passive instrument. He had formed no plan of conversion: he wished to be of use, indeed, to Roman Catholics, as well as members of our own Church, in this parish, but had no thought of bringing them over from the Church of Rome. He was wholly unconnected with societies, or with conversionary movements elsewhere. He held out no temporal inducement; *on the contrary*, he fairly told the converts, that they must expect to encounter hardships, and possibly persecution. Still, numbers presented themselves. He sifted their motives: those who were insincere, he rejected; there seemed to be very many such: those who were dubious, as to character or motives, he kept, for a long time, in a sort of probationary state: and he has had the satisfaction of finding that a few, who were perhaps, *at first*, swayed by secular hopes, are now among his best converts. Numbers, it is to be observed, come to him, from considerable distances, to inquire and to be instructed; he receives none into our Church till after a careful preparation of them; and in these duties he is daily occupied from breakfast to dinner. He has appointed the last Sunday in each month for the reception of converts into the Church; and on the last occasion there were thirty-five. He tells me that the converts are the *best* members of his flock—the most regular in attendance at church, the most attentive to the service, and very audible

and fervent in repeating the responses. It is, in fact, he tells, quite edifying to hear them. The two higher classes are thoroughly in earnest; no small proportion of them sincere Christians; in the lowest class, no tendency to waver.

"It is remarkable, that of the converts *not one* has been seen in a public-house since joining our Church. This, at first, was probably from the fear of being insulted; at least, with some it may have been so; now, it is all from principle. In consequence, there is a visible improvement in the decency and comfort of their houses and clothing, &c.

"It is a curious little fact, that adults of fifty years of age and upwards are now studious readers of the Bible; and that, to enable them to read, Mr. Murray has actually exhausted a shop-keeper's store of convex spectacles; he has bought not less than twenty pair of them: this is better than Goldsmith's 'twelve gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases.'

"The service at funerals has had a powerful effect: numbers of Roman Catholics are apt to attend, behaving generally with great reverence: whenever our Saviour's name is mentioned, a general bow. Some time ago, at a funeral, there was a single exception; a man, who stood behind Mr. Murray, made faces, and turned the service into ridicule: Mr. M. observed that a man at his own right-hand looked agitated and irritated. Mr. M. afterwards asked him why he was so affected. He replied, 'Sir, I observed a person behind you making faces, and ridiculing the service: I never had a greater struggle in my life. I was strongly tempted to knock him down: the old man was getting up in me, but, thank God, I was able to restrain myself.' This honest convert had been the head of a clan, a fighting factionary at fairs—a leader of 'the four year olds.'

"The advances have been made by the Roman Catholics themselves. Mr. Murray has not sought converts: at first, there was a fear of the priest; that is now entirely gone; and his violent opposition, instead of retarding, has accelerated the progress of conversion. Mr. Murray has had no coadjutor in this business.

"Several promising young clergymen in Mr. M.'s neighbourhood are likely to have converts; and I have begged of him to advise, assist, and superintend their proceedings.

"On the whole, I think conversions from the Church of Rome will go on in this diocese."

Than this interesting statement, by so amiable and great a man, and one who saw reason to change his earlier notions of priests and Rome, nothing can be more gratifying. It is really worthy of the movement described,

truly creditable to the instrument engaged to effect it; and fully characteristic of the writer, thus convinced of his former error. In a letter, written the evening of the same day as the above, to the same distinguished personage, this additional passage occurs:—

“I believe that no single parish, in any other part of Ireland, was so early in the field, or has produced so large a host of converts. So much for quantity: but if quality be considered, I think soberly, that Askeaton leaves all the rest at an immeasurable distance. I do not say this boastingly: I have not had any share in the transactions; and, if I had, the glory would all be due to God. But I consider the facts valuable, as testimonies to the superior efficacy of the more quiet and less obtrusive way; now, as heretofore, and as we are taught it will be hereafter, ‘The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.’”

God, in his providence, has some time removed this indefatigable minister from the Vicarship of Askeaton to the Deanery of Ardagh. May He spare him to see throughout the land bloomingly flourish the good seed he himself so sedulously sowed. Many of the converts which he gained to Christ have left this country, and proved in strange lands the value of Gospel teaching.

Persecution grew so furious against those who dared to be free, that the system of settling the converts in colonies was adopted. It was reasonably supposed that they might, by being collected, deter open annoyance, and have generally less occasion to fear. About the year 1828, one of those colonies was established by the National Church, in a place called *Kilmeague*, county Kildare. The converts were at first few; but, before 1846, nearly one hundred families colonised there. They got no rewards but those a newly acquired industry collected. Farmers formed the majority of this number, and they were distinguished from their unconverted neighbours by cleanliness and prosperity. These differences produced jealousy and hatred. Against the practical exposition of both, the converts stood unfailing. Priests, or their excited flocks, could not do much, though they, doubtless, did some, harm.

Another colony was formed in DINGLE, suggested by

the result of exertions made there in 1829. During a few days in the August of 1851, I had the privilege of visiting this now widely-famed and interesting missionary station. I went there commissioned by the enterprising proprietary of the *Warder*, to ascertain, personally, the exact state of operations. This was made necessary, as vile reports concerning them had been extensively circulated by the Romish priests' press. The substance of the result of these inquiries, given in another shape through the *Warder* and *Evening Herald*, to the public, I shall now sum up :—

It is almost unnecessary to say that Dingle is a town situated on one of the largest and most delightful of those bays which beautifully indent the south-western coast of Ireland. But it seems not well known, because seldom visited by the tourist, that its position has advantages, as regards scenery, more wildly picturesque than perhaps any town in Ireland can boast of. Here it is that a Reformation movement of the greatest importance has been some time going on ; and of this only it is my intention to write.

In order to show what encouragement at first the inhabitants of this locality afforded to the godly-purposed men who designed the movement, I may mention that in 1829 the Rev. John Gregg, who, with some other clergymen, was deputed by the Irish "Home Mission" to make a tour in the south of Ireland, announced that he would preach a sermon in Irish, in a room over the market-house. He had placards prepared for posting, bearing invitations to the Romanists ; but throughout *all Dingle not an individual* could be got to post one, in consideration of any sum, and the office fell to the lot of a man who belonged to another part of the country. His congregation was small, and turned out, besides, exceedingly noisy, though it was supposed the prejudice against a heretical Church was met by selecting a market-house for the purpose of holding the meeting. It may be mentioned, by way of illustrating how surely though slowly the sacred truth gains ground, and influ-

ences individuals as it does whole congregations, that at this meeting the most turbulent spirit, and one who gave annoying evidences that he then despised Protestantism as "an innovation," has since become a clever and faithful minister of the Gospel of Jesus, and now not far from Dingle preaches that "innovation." I am informed that it was on this occasion Lord Ventry (who is lay-rector of Dingle) saw the necessity of opening extensively a Reformation movement there.

In 1831 the Rev. G. Gubbins was appointed curate. His residence was a cabin which cost him a shilling per week. Though excluded from the comforts and usages he was accustomed to, his ardent spirit did not fail to prompt him on to the missionary goal. Through glen and plain, in cabin and slated house, his first exertions sought out the neglected, and therefore Romanised Protestants. Five families of these strayed beings God enabled him to restore, in 1832, to the true fold, from which, through the earthly pastor's drowsiness, they had long wandered. He superintended *three* parishes, which, on his coming, had neither church nor school, unless the ruins of both. Being full of Christian zeal, his arduous duties may be conceived; and the reason of Protestants becoming Romanised may be understood from the ruinous condition of his overgrown charge. During the cholera year no prospect of danger defeated his pious purposes. Romanists fairly judged in this case, the system by the man; and in liking one, lost hatred for the other. The Rev. Mr. Gayer became chaplain to Lord Ventry in 1833, who soon after nominated him rector of the parishes in which Mr. Gubbins laboured. He found Protestantism just reviving under this faithful man. The following year the real Roman Catholic inhabitants felt a disposition to do as those did who had put up with Romanism, when they had nothing else—"come out." Many of them reformed, and were accompanied in that glorious and important step by two of their priests.

The unusual thing of evening lectures on controversy, which Mr. Gayer introduced, attracted all the "curious"

to go see "just what was going on." The first visits to the lectures were productive of such good, that soon, instead of a stealthy "curiosity seeing," many, in open defiance of priestly authority, showed an earnest desire to procure information. The priests saw the movement was beginning seriously to affect themselves, and they set about remedying affairs. How? Simply by cursing with "bell, book, and candle-light" all who joined or sanctioned it. Such childish tyranny could not curb the growing anxiety about "spirituals," and several new families became convinced that Romanism was not altogether what its priests represented it to be. These families were not confined to the middle or lower order—*some were of considerable fortune*. In a very short time the avowed converts numbered seventy, while the doubters and inquirers were hundreds. The "gentry" around, however, and indeed many clergymen not at Dingle, were somewhat doubtful about the amount of dependence which ought to be placed on these converts. But Mr. Gayer persevered, and the result fully justified the determination, for *not one of that number* has relapsed to Romanism. Some have died true Christians; others yet live. All bore the most trying persecution with saintly fortitude. Many instances of the sincerity even to death of those much-injured creatures are related with tears of thanksgiving by those yet alive. The "good tidings of great joy" spread with a rapidity which the power of an Almighty agency could alone support. But as the Reformation increased, persecution assumed a more desperate and formidable appearance. Converts were threatened, excommunicated, and all remaining Romanists forbidden intercourse with them. They were refused employment or any sort of assistance. It became necessary, therefore, to establish a settlement, where they might be remuneratively employed, as well as protected. The clergymen were hunted, threatened, and continually pursued by riotous mobs, who were not only following their ignorant and bigoted inclinations, but the stern advice of the priests. Much litigation was the

consequence. From the proceedings of one legal trial in which Mr. Gayer was concerned I extract the following statements which are reported in the eloquent speech delivered by Mr. Bennet, Q.C., when opening the proceedings:—

“Mr. Gayer’s exertions were spread over a large district. Ventry is distant from Dingle about three miles: Dunurlin six, and Kilmacheader four. He attended to the duties of those different parishes with assiduity. Gentlemen, the number of persons anxious to attend his church increased, and it became necessary to build additional churches. One was built at Ventry, another at Dunurlin, and school-houses were also built; and all this was done, I must tell you, from benevolent motives. There was neither terror, threat, force, nor any other means, but simply the exertion of charity. The only weapon made use of on these occasions was the Word of the Almighty God, and the parishioners being instructed in the principles of religion, the condition and habits of such as attended his ministry were improved. Gentlemen of the jury, in addition to this, Mr. Gayer also promoted works of charity in the country, no matter what was the profession of the objects of it. He was benevolent to all. While erecting those buildings, which were done under Mr. Gayer’s superintendence, he adopted no such thing as exclusive dealing. He employed Protestant and Roman Catholic alike. He was the benefactor of both. Not even with respect to servants of his own house did he observe any religious distinctions.”

In the preface to that trial is this passage:—

“Upon evidence which extorted a verdict from a jury of whom *one half were Roman Catholics*, it appears that 170 families, including 800 souls, have been added to the Protestant faith in that immediate neighbourhood; that no small number have already sealed the truth and sincerity of their conversion by dying in the faith of their adoption, while the whole body, notwithstanding the insults and outrages daily heaped upon them, are an inoffensive, orderly, and well-conducted class of persons, who would enjoy both the good opinion and good offices of their countrymen of all persuasions, if civil and religious liberty were more than a name in Ireland.”

No correct estimate can be formed of what the minister had to endure and the converts to suffer. The people, of course, merely obeyed their priests, of whose Christian command an idea can be obtained from the following

lines, the emanation of a sacerdotal genius greatly esteemed in that quarter:—

“If the parson should stroll to you, Donald Montgomery—
If you be a shoemaker, Donald Montgomery,
Stab him and bore him, behind and before him,
The lapstone will floor him, brave Donald Montgomery.”

In this strain are several verses which were dinned in the Rev. Mr. Lewis's ears (who is the present superintendent) wherever he went. Oft the threats they contained were all but put in execution. It will be asked, did the priests really countenance this? On one occasion, in open court, before the board of magistrates, “Father Owen,” the present priest, said determinedly, in defending his staff of ballad singers, “Had I a voice I'd sing these songs in the broad street, and I would not suffer any one to interrupt me.” So harmless did that hero, who is known as “Bonaparte,” consider them! With this necessarily brief allusion to things past, I beg to introduce what I myself witnessed in a visit to Dingle.

Having arrived in the town at ten o'clock at night, it would be rather strange if “I was found out” immediately to be the *Warder* emissary, come down for the express purpose of contradicting the Romish “special reporters,” and that, therefore, when on the following morning, before eight o'clock, I walked out to visit the cottages where the converts are settled, they were apprized of my visit, and all the cleanliness, the thriftiness, and the different features which ever accompany industrious habits, that I witnessed, were merely assumed—nothing less than shams. “The converts lead a quiet lazy life,” quoth report. Fact bluntly contradicts that assertion. Leaving even a very trifle of truth in the statement of the Romish press, it is a gross calumny on the industry of Dingle, without considering anything else.

I found the cottages, in which it was deemed necessary to put the poor persecuted converts, erected separate from any of the buildings of the town; they formed a distinct settlement, not miscalled “colony,” and were kept as clean and as neat as possible. For this, be it understood, the occupiers have *no assistance*. Nothing can equal the

contrast in appearance between the cottage of a true Christian and that of a Romanist. Though alike in size and construction, one is kept as a hovel fit for pigs, while the other might represent the neatness of an English cottage. All the little girls, children of converts, were employed at satin-stitch embroidery and various sorts of knitting, at which they work assiduously in their respective houses, but are able to earn only a mere trifle as yet. They seemed happy at a visit from a stranger, and told me they commence to work at six every morning. I would suggest a *special reporter's* visit from the priests' press to this locality, in order to tell their reverences accurately how far their knowledge of God and godliness extends. It would profit both. I next visited a meadow where seven mowers were "hard at work." These were some of the occupants of the cottages, who received "a fair day's pay for a fair day's work," and hold their cottages in the same manner that the workmen of all landed proprietors retain theirs. These persons were many years converts, and can well inform the man who is curious about it why they became such. After breakfast I walked up to another part of the village where converts live, and there the self-same characteristic cleanliness met my view; the same marks of industry, the same blissful content, and the same capability to account for their adopted religion. Next I directed my course towards the schools, but it unfortunately happened to be when the adult male classes had received a "holiday." The younger classes of females were present, and answered accurately all such questions as were put to them. At twelve o'clock classes were to be held in the church, and thither I went. It is a nice compact little building, without architectural pretensions, and capable of containing about four hundred and fifty persons. Morning service was read by the Rev. S. Lewis, by whose prudent zeal and activity the Reformation movement is here brought to its present encouraging state. To this truly competent clergyman the Dingle mission is now altogether fortunately confided, as a worthy successor to Gayler and Gubbins. After prayers I had the honour of being

selected as the catechist of the most forward adult class. They were all converts, and it was my duty to take particular pains to ascertain, not only what amount of Scriptural knowledge they possessed, but also how they could bring to bear such knowledge against Romanism. From that trial I feel confident that any endeavour short of depriving them of reason could not succeed in making them again believe the errors of Romanism. The number in the church was about 190. After the classes were duly examined and instructed, I accompanied the Rev. Mr. Lewis to the farm, which has been purchased by the Dingle mission, that converts may be employed thereon. A remarkable fact, which the reverend gentleman told me as we went along, affords almost an unquestionable argument that such a system as colonisation should be adopted. From his statement I gather that though the amount necessary for the erection of two piers, one at Dingle and the other at Ventry, was chiefly contributed by Protestant landed proprietors, yet no Protestant received a *single day's* employment thereat. A convert, therefore, might as well think of flying as to hope for success in an application for an engagement there. I think it but right to all anxious about the affairs of the Reformation movement, and to the system itself, to copy also the following statement of Mr. Lewis, in reference to the employment of converts, which has appeared in a published prospectus :—

“I am exceedingly anxious that these poor converts, who have given such proofs of their sincerity, should be employed; and I recommend for this purpose that more land be taken. I think we have Scriptural authority for affording protection and temporal aid, in time of exclusive dealing, famine, and want. In the history of the mother Church—the Church of Jerusalem—it is written for our learning, and for our example too, that a general fund was provided to meet the wants of the helpless members of that infant Church, while suffering persecution. I would never have undertaken the arduous duties of this missionary settlement, beset and encompassed as it is by many and great difficulties, if I entertained a doubt of the soundness of the principles on which it is established.

“We must, therefore, endeavour to raise the character of the people, and teach them to be diligent in business, as well as

fervent in spirit. We must urge upon them that it is the bounden duty of every Christian man, who takes the Bible as his code of laws, to learn and labour to get his own living, honestly and diligently, in that state of life in which it has pleased God to call them. By this means we have much hope that the farms and the several industrial employments will be every year more reproductive, and eventually self-supporting."

This is the system briefly explained; but better arguments appear in the continual and various persecutions to which the poor converts are subjected. They show fully the necessity for such a settlement.

The farm, which contains 180 acres of land, is leased, and has undergone reclamation under an experienced agriculturist. On it about fifty converts are daily employed in various pursuits, and they, for the most part, work by task. They were all at work when I arrived on the land—some draining, some planting, some weeding, some building, and some carting. It was truly a gratifying spectacle. No more convincing proof that industry and cleanliness are ever the accompaniments of pure Christianity, while the reverse follows Romanism, could be imagined, than that really existing among the Dingle mission labourers, and peculiarising their work.

It is not well known that the sincerity of these poor creatures is rigidly tested before they become acknowledged converts. From the statements which appeared from time to time in the Romish organs, it would be inferred that the contrary is the fact—that they are all insincere, and that whether or no, is a matter of little concern in the minds of "the parsons," provided that they can get them.

Let me here remark, that the greatest caution is observed in "receiving a convert." A man must endure years of painful persecution, during which time he receives no pecuniary relief. He must bear to be from year's end to year's end hooted, pelted, and stoned to his very door, which often is burst in after him by a furious and priest-excited mob. After giving satisfactory evidences of his sincerity, he is acknowledged a convert, and when all other resources have failed, employment at task-work is procured for him. Up to that time he was a

“probationer.” Now, in order to guard against all imposture, no addition was made to the number of converts during the years of famine. If Mr. Lewis would only act upon the principle the priests attributed to him, he could at this moment assemble almost the entire population of Dingle as nominal Protestants—he could deprive the priest of almost all his parishioners and mass-attenders ; a proof, by the way, of their new-grown disregard for a system to which superstition had so closely cemented them.

It will be remembered by many that great boasting, by a recently-established Romish society and its press, was made about the proofs Dingle afforded of “bribery and intimidation” being used to make converts. Such “proofs” as have been adduced, and they were necessarily the best, cannot stand honest investigation one minute. But it will surprise few to learn, that all the reports are mere “taken-for-granted rumours,” put down as *facts*.

A case in point can be despatched in a very few words. John Stack, the best amongst the proofs, was “made to utter” innumerable falsehoods against the truth of the working of the mission, and the sincerity of all the converts. To have done with him, read what he is “made to say” in the *Freeman*, and this, which he voluntarily wrote in my presence :—

“I have seen, with great surprise, some statements in the *Freeman's Journal*, in my name. These statements are *all false*—nor did I ever give any authority to any person to publish anything about me.

“JOHN STACK.

“Signed in the presence of MAURICE BRIAN,
(and two others).”

“19th July.”

What adds to the grossness of this selection on the part of Rome is, that Stack was never reckoned as a convert ! and gave this document in respect to the character of Mr. Lewis, for whom he does hold, and ever did hold, great esteem !

I obtained an accidental interview with another “favourite” of the Romish journal's correspondent, Joan

Bresnahan, whose first husband died in the faith, but whose second was expelled the colony for insubordination. This man, soon after his expulsion, waited in ambush with a dagger, to deprive Mr. Lewis of life, and at length ended a miserable career in a "mad-house." She told me that she was disliked after her husband was put away, and that she followed him, though she didn't like the "Papists." She says she now gets three shillings a-week and her bed from the priest, and will so long as she remains "reconciled." No one but the "reconciled" are thought fit for such a "charity." She avowed, without my asking, that her heart and soul was in the Protestant religion, and that since she left it she was not herself at all; that she would go back only being afraid of starvation, as Mr. Lewis would give her nothing; "and, indeed," said she, with tears in her eyes, "if he would only get me something to keep me from starving, I'd ask no more, and go back to the Church where my heart is, and my husband died in." She denied plumply ever having given utterance to a single statement attributed to her in the Romish paper. She admitted having had an interview in the priest's parlour with some person, but though their object was to elicit such statements, they did not succeed.

Timothy Couchy, also named as a "speaker for himself," in the most solemn and deliberate manner swore that he never at any time expressed himself "in the way the *Freeman* said," to use his own expressions, "and never gave any statement that was meant to say them things. As God is my Judge, I said nothing of the kind at all at all; and I couldn't, for I hadn't anything of the kind to say."

Thus, it occurred to me, that the most plain and expressive manner of destroying the boasted facts which garnished the Romish journals, and furnished conversation for many, would be the brief but pointed statements of a few.

Another calumny uttered against all *converts*, and offered to be proved by a reference to Dingle, is this: "the perverts are utterly ignorant!" That statement is as

false as priestly malignity could invent ! I tested its worth in the sample held up by the Romanists for examination, and am convinced that the Dingle converts are not ignorant either of the religion they have embraced, or of the reasons which prompted them to embrace it. They can well give reason for the faith they have adopted. They are ignorant beyond measure, if it be such to know God's book and its value—if it be such to discard every superstition and recklessness of character which they had from Romanism, and if it be such to trust alone to the all-sufficient atonement of Christ for their souls' salvation. The special correspondents did not even try if they had this great ignorance. But they have acquired much knowledge, and that is what the priests regret. If they asked questions, they would then have presented such answers as these which I now offer. One man being asked why he ventured to come from the religion of his fathers to that which he was long taught to believe damnable, answered—"The ancient Irish understood their clargy ; I never could understand the priests, and I find everything is explained in your Church." The answer of another individual is quite expressive—"I am only returning to the religion of my ancestors ; my grandfather was a Protestant for the first hundred, and a Roman Catholic for the last five years of his life ;" and he added, "you may know from the names of many of the people of this barony that they were *Palatines*, as my grandfather was : the Lovets and Walkers, Thomases and Sayerses, Granfields, Browns and Bakers, &c., &c., are all the grandchildren of Protestants." I am happy, however, to add more satisfactory answers, given by converts, of whose sincerity I have no doubt. One, and the answer ought to silence calumny for ever, replied—"I have read the Bible, and *if it is true*, Popery is *false* ;" another said, "It was the second commandment *tumbled* me out of Popery ; it forbids *bowing down* to images—all who go to the chapel break that commandment ;" and a third replied, "I have been long depending on *holy oil*, and *holy clay*, and *holy bones*, and such trash as the priest taught me ; but now

I trust in Christ, and *Christ alone*, for salvation." Every convert has a not less significant answer on the same or other such subjects. Let the simple statements, then, of these honest people (whose sincerity I have taken every means to sift, without being able to discover the slightest wavering on their part) hush for ever the unworthy storm which priestly enmity has so long directed against this feature of the mission. The converts are *sincere*, and by no means *ignorant*.

So much for the converts. The locality is not less expressive of the work going on amongst its inhabitants. Instead of but one small church to which the people who were religiously disposed, in this immense district, may go, there are now five places of worship—three commodious churches and two licensed school-houses. The service in two of them is given in the native language. The families colonised—who owe much for being so to the noble exertions of Mrs. Colonel Inglis, at that time Miss M'Mahon—number better than 255, consisting of more than 1,150 souls gained to Christ's fold. These are increasing. Nine schools, fairly attended daily, are now under the care of the mission. About eighty converts have testified their sincerity in death, while none have wished for the priest in that trying moment. Nine from amongst the number of converts are now preachers of the WORD that made them free. One of this number was a priestly opponent, sent specially by his bishop to stay the work. God opened his own eyes, and he saw that the people were right, being with Jesus, while *he* was wrong, relying chiefly on man's tradition. He now furthers what he then attempted to stay.

While these true exertions in the really good cause were being carried on with such blessings, agitation raged amongst the priests, and our Legislators, as before shown, imprudently dismantled of royal patronage the Kildare-street Education Society. A substitute was given, in a "conciliating" system called "National Education," which, in fact, conciliated few, and disgusted all the truly good men who afterwards deter-

minedly and firmly opposed it, aided by many others whom it was designed to please. The spirit of holy resentment this unrighteous as impolitic government founding roused created the CHURCH EDUCATION SOCIETY in 1839, of whose operations I may as well say a few words here:—

“ Having sprung from the emergency of the time, it purposed to assist schools already existing in the country, and to establish *new* schools on an *improved system*, for the purpose of affording to the children of the Church instruction in the Holy Scriptures, and in the Catechism and other formularies of the Church, under the direction of the bishops and parochial clergy, and under the tuition of teachers who are members of the United Church of England and Ireland.”

It labours by means of diocesan societies; of these it has now more than twenty-seven. It supports at present nearly 1,900 schools, at which about 108,500 scholars pretty regularly attend. Better than thirty-three thousand of this number are Roman Catholics. It is cheeringly aided by a London Hibernian Society. The present Parliament, under Lord Derby, seems inclined, however tardily, to do this society a justice it has long been denied—to give it unconditionally a pecuniary grant.

Five years before the origin of the *Church Education Society*, which indirectly, but very materially favours Reformation, a Ladies’ “Committee” was formed, with a view of assisting the avowedly reforming *Irish Society*. It was denominated a “*Ladies’ Auxiliary*” to that body, and was for a considerable time strictly and dependently so. In that position it no longer is. On applying for some statistics, I received the following letter, containing them, from the amiable, accomplished, and zealous Christian lady who devotes her time and talents to the onerous duties of secretary:—

“ 17, Upper Sackville-street, Dublin, 1852.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,—In order to meet your wish of having a short statement of the work in which ‘The Ladies’ Auxiliary to

the Irish Society' is engaged, I will briefly tell you what has been done, and what we desire to do. In the first place, we have for the last eighteen years sent forth a number of Irish Readers, generally placing them where the Irish Society has opened the way by their schools. God has so prospered us, that now we have ninety-eight agents, who are engaged more or less in reading the Bible to the Roman Catholic peasantry. They are men of God, well versed in the Scriptures, and desirous, by their walk and conversation, to be living Epistles of the Word. Most of them (indeed all, with the exception of three or four) were once Roman Catholics themselves, and so well know the depths of Satan connected with that dark system. Their duty is to go from house to house reading the Bible wherever they are allowed to do so; and when they are not permitted to read, they are often listened to, when they speak of its contents or quote passages from its pages. Their usual salary is £30 a-year. To some few we give more, and to others (part of whose time only is given to the work) less. We have lately adopted a plan which we find works admirably. It is that of inducing friends to adopt, as it were, some particular locality as their own, and attend to give, or collect from others, the sum requisite for the support of a Reader, whom we then consider as theirs, and whose journals we forward to them: and thus a peculiar, and what is better, a prayerful, interest is established between the friend who assists and the individual assisted. Much good has already resulted from the labours of these poor men. The long winter evenings, that in olden time were spent in drunkenness, revelry, or quarrelling—when many a plot of blood-shedding and rebellion were hatched—now often witness large groups of frize-coated peasants assembled round the fires, where, with no other light than that afforded by a piece of blazing bogwood, the Word of God is searched, and a day's knowledge of its contents attained that would scarcely be believed by those who have not witnessed it. The consequence has been, that an immense number have left Rome, and joined our Church. A still larger number see its errors, and wish to come out from it, but dread the persecution that inevitably ensues; and, what is better, a number have 'fallen asleep,' refusing to see a priest, and resting all their hopes of salvation on the atoning blood of our blessed Saviour. In speaking of the persecution they have to go through, I would say, that the moment they leave Rome, and often the moment they commence even to read the Bible, they are denounced in the chapels; put out of work; avoided by their relations and friends; and often meet with open violence both as respects their property and their persons, even to the endangering

their lives. Only that I must be brief, I could tell many a tale that would harrow up your soul, and which in England probably would not be credited: *yet they are true*; I *know* them to be so in many instances—I *believe* them to be so in all. We have then a fund for the purpose of relieving those poor converts. We do not wish to give gratuitously, so that we help sometimes in purchasing small portions of land at which they may work as labourers, and we also help them with seed to crop their little plots of ground; or if they are fishermen, we help to procure them boats or nets, &c., &c. Then there are the children—the thousands of children—full of anxiety to attend Scriptural schools—well able to produce text after text to prove every essential doctrine of God's Word, and valiant for the Protestant faith—to whom the name of Jesus is as 'ointment poured forth,' because they know from the Bible that it is the only name whereby they can be saved—children before whom the priests of Rome tremble and are afraid—children who, in many instances, have taught their parents 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' and urged them to come out from Rome, and who, young as they are, show that 'God is in them of a truth.' These children cannot attend school without a meal (which can be given at the small cost of less than a halfpenny each child), for they must be employed in gathering sea-weed or wild turnips, &c., to try to eke out a wretched existence, unless they get the one poor meal I speak of; and to show they need it, I quote a few lines from a letter just received:—'The misery here is appalling. One little girl, thirteen years old, fainted from weakness, and on inquiry it was found she had not touched food for two days, yet she still persisted in attending school. There are other children who were found eating wild turnips, and others, it is said, under present circumstances, cannot continue to exist.' Then we have many applications for clothes, both for children and for adults, who cannot go to church for want of them; as one clergyman writes:—'Two little boys here have but one jacket between them, and it is often a matter of dispute which of them shall be the happy one that shall have it to go to church; and some of my poor people have to borrow from the Roman Catholics to enable them to go out, but, of course, they are not willing to lend them for them to attend divine service.' Often, too, there comes from some wild, dark spot amongst the hills, a petition for a school. The inhabitants have heard the Bible, and it has done its work, and they are anxious that their little ones should know and love it too; and then the minister writes to us, for Christ's sake to aid him in erecting a school-house, or hiring a room, or, if possible, to give him £10 or even £5 to pay a teacher. Then we hear of some Maynooth student, whose heart

God has opened to see things by the Bible standard, and he is anxious to devote his life to the service of Him who has 'plucked him as a brand from the burning,' and to proclaim 'the story of peace' in his native tongue; but he must first pass through the University, and the fees have to be paid, and he has no one to look to, to help him in his penniless state. I just hint at these every-day occurrences to show what we could do had we but sufficient funds, and what it often wrings our heart to have to give a refusal to.

"Affectionately yours,

"A. C. MASON."

CHAPTER X.

(COMMENCING WITH THE YEAR 1839.)

THE DIFFICULTY SOLVED—IRISHMEN GROW INDEPENDENT—CLEANSING EFFECT OF CHRISTIANITY.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.—*Rom. xiii. 12.* Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—*Ephesians, vi. 11, 12.* For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.—1 *Cor. i. 26.*

It is evident from the growing anxiety about Reformation, which the facts detailed in the last chapter show, that the nineteenth century, at least, was not to be lost in sullen slumbers, like its immediate predecessors. The “difficulty” which had so long tested the abilities of English legislators was being resolved, by many anxious individuals co-operating in the work of God—evangelising, and then, as a necessary consequence, civilising the country.

There has been an alarming bitterness ever evidenced in Ireland’s political movements, and a suspicious calmness when this characteristic anger for any length has been appeased, the fount of which no statesman has detected, or, having detected, sought to stop up. Ireland is, and has been *the* “difficulty.” And it is somewhat singular, that until now the real cause of our particular disaffections and misery, though it was oft closely investigated, had never been truly established, or, if discovered, acted upon. Strangers were wont to assign the deplorable state of our internal condition, the poverty, su-

perstition, and depravity which lamentably prevailed, to some innate corruption, some fatal and unimprovable demerit in the national character. The factious animosity which, since the twelfth century, plundered us of peace, was disposed of by the same "easy argument." A change was, indeed, imperceptibly effected in our position and character at the time of the papal "conquest." Then began in earnest civil strife. And, as could be distinctly traced, then was engendered a foul and noxious religious system in the country, which did invert, if not totally efface, by its superstitious tyranny, the dignity of our earlier nationality. We are not, and were not, as Irishmen, naturally or nationally a demoralised, filthy, and unconstitutional people. Therefore we totally dissent from the odious inference intended and likely to be drawn by those who argue from erroneous premises, and say we are, at best, as a race, inefficient agents for our own independence. Protestants in Ireland, and Irishmen in a free country, answer, no—emphatically no. But, I repeat, our miserable condition is traceable to the infusion amongst us of debasing religious doctrines, not to natural or national inertness. In short, we owe all our calamities to Romanism, and to it alone. The existence of that system is incompatible with prosperity, as much as the Gospel spread is salutary to its purposes. Ireland's evil consists in harbouring Romanism, and Rome may be pointed at as her hereditary oppressor. History stands forth as the bold and incorruptible witness to the fact; and the days we live in are no mute testimony to its authenticity.

It being beyond doubt that our prostration as a kingdom has arisen from connexion with Rome, it follows, that to qualify ourselves for a restoration to the lost position, we must have total deliverance from that foreign and galling yoke. That opinion now prevailed, and that object was being gradually and happily effected. The glad fact was echoing through Ireland. From the picturesque and wild rocks of Dingle, all along the western coast to the north of Mayo, the proscribed service of God was becoming known, even in the disowned but

beautiful language of the people. The jurisdiction of the Gospel was being loved, and the faith of the Lord Jesus beginning to be cherished.

Silent, slow, and certain went on the operations of the *Irish Society* for this glorious end. At its annual meeting in 1832, a deputation from its masters and scholars of Kingscourt, presented an indignant protest, signed by upwards of 3,000 names, against the contemplated withdrawal of the national grant from the Kildare-place Society. They spoke in the fulness of experience, being practically able to appreciate the beauty and utility of Scriptural education. In this important document they assured—

“The committee of the Irish Society, and his Majesty’s Government, that the Irish peasantry are most anxious for Scriptural knowledge for themselves and their children; there are thousands of Roman Catholics, whose cry can never reach the ears of the British senate, who *dare not breathe a word against the tyranny that oppresses them*, who, from sincere love for Scriptural education, in defiance of every species of hostility, continue to send their children to Bible schools.”

Dr. Monck Mason notices, in his sketch of the missions of this Society, a curious spirit of inquiry which sprung up among the people respecting the novel facts disclosed by the Irish teaching. He says:—

“They found that the Bible, when perused in the native tongue, was not the pestilent book it was represented to be; and they became exceedingly anxious to know what that book was in the Protestant English version. At the same time they became very inquisitive about the true meaning of difficult passages—this led them to the latter translation; and they were surprised to find, not only that it was not deserving of the stigma attached to it, but that it assisted them in the understanding of many difficult and almost obsolete words: while, by the marginal references with which some of its editions are furnished, it let in collateral lights upon the obscurities of several passages. The English Bibles, therefore, became excessively popular—there was no supplying the demand for them; and actually, in the very place where, but a dozen years before, one of these heretical volumes had been triumphantly burnt, 700 copies of English Testaments were sold,

upon one occasion, in the course of a very few hours. Upwards of 4,000 found welcome circulation, and more are loudly called for.”—(*Report of 1833.*)

To meet this encouragingly increased demand, the *Hibernian Bible Society* munificently granted, in 1839, 1,000 Bibles, 1,600 Testaments, and 500 copies of the Book of Genesis. Of this grant thousands eagerly availed themselves—old and young. An insatiable desire to read of God, and of his spotless law, had seized multitudes of Irishmen; and to feed it was the godly delight of the Irish and other societies.

Persecution continued augmenting with the growth of Bible reading. Many children were left helpless orphans—their fathers becoming victims to Romish enmity; many young wives became desolate widows—their husbands being denounced as Bible-readers, from the altar; and many aged fathers were cast out, utterly destitute—the sapling sons who sustained the grey-haired sire being banished, for reading the pages of Holy Writ. These persecutions, borne with amazing fortitude, became the cement of the Church, and the “proof-fire” of those gained to God. Some were, indeed, dismayed; but many were fortified, and others undeceived.

The society’s labourers soon found ingress to new strongholds of that enemy whom they had so successfully ousted at Kingscourt. The Roman Catholics of Donegal became acquainted with the Gospel of salvation, in their native tongue. Many in Limerick, Clare, Clonmel, and Kilkenny, were similarly favoured. The progress was, of course, not to be marked by its passing manifestations. The seed was sown, and in due time it did fruit. An instance of the peculiar life and vigour of this sacred planting is given by an “Irish Inspector,” who thus wrote in his journal from Dromaire:—

“During his last tour in one of the wildest parts of Leitrim, the master of one of our schools brought him to a house where he was to remain during the night. The neighbours gathered to that house for reading and hearing the Irish. An old man, ninety-seven years of age, who lay in the corner, and had not been able to walk for the last seven years, and never spoke English in

all his life, asked me to hear him say his lesson. He repeated the 5th chapter of Matthew, from the beginning to the 24th verse, with as much force and steadiness as if he was only thirty years old. I was much gratified to understand that he had been instructed so far by his *great-grandchild*, a little boy of about twelve years of age."

This poor old Romanist was soon after laid upon his death-bed, and expired repeating the chapter of Matthew which he was so fond of.

The following significant and important remarks, highly illustrative of the *Irish Society's* operations and success, occur in the annual Report of 1838:—

"Invariably, wherever the system of the society has been in operation for a few years, that which the governors of this land have been long labouring to accomplish is at once brought about—the drawing together, in the unity of the spirit and bond of peace, of persons, whose previous education has been in principles the most jarring and opposed—the joining over the Scriptures, of the Saxon and the Gaelic, the Protestant and the Romanist, the clergyman and the peasant. Let it not, therefore, be said, that the use of the Scriptures in schools will have a tendency to prevent all this—we have fully proved it to be decidedly the reverse; and that the Bible has been supereminently the bond and cement of that union, commenced on truly liberal principles of conciliation, which we would contemplate with so much satisfaction, and dwell on with such reasonable hope."

In the meeting whereat the report containing that passage was read, the Rev. Mr. Winning told the following pithy anecdote, which I give, as quoted by Mason:—

"A gentleman of the county of Tyrone having called on an Irish inspector, was told he was in an inner room. Approaching the door, he heard the buzz of many voices; and, on opening it, he found the inspector surrounded by twenty or thirty men. 'Pat,' said he, 'I am afraid you are making Ribbonmen here. 'Oh no, your honour!' was the retort; 'I am not making Ribbonmen, but I am making *United Irishmen*: and this,' holding up a large Irish Bible, 'is the bond of our union.'"

These peaceful and blessed nightly assemblies made the priests amazingly sore at heart. The subjoined extract of a letter written at Bandon, in 1835, and given

by Mr. Mason, tells a little of the extent of that soreness :—

“In consequence of one of our masters leaving the Church of Rome, all who possessed Irish Testaments or Bibles, in the parish where he lived, were desired to give them up or burn them ; but, from the strictest inquiry, we have not been able to find out that a single copy was destroyed ; on the contrary, two men came to the inspector, a few days after, asking for the loan of Irish Bibles.”

The annexed statement, copied from the letter of a superintendent at Kingscourt, in the same year, discloses much more on the same touchy point :—

“It would be painful to you to report the degree of violence and wrath to which *the schools* are exposed, for it would only be a repetition of what we have so often detailed before—cursed with bell, book, and candle—cursed in their houses, in their flesh, and marrow, and bones ; still it has pleased God that many, notwithstanding, are holding with the truth, and also that the light is breaking in upon their souls. From the general opposition to which both teachers and taught during the past year were exposed, there seems to have been a united and simultaneous effort, amongst the priests and bishops, to put down Irish Scriptural schools. In no part of our extensive district have our poor men entirely escaped some species of persecution ; on every altar, and from several altars on the same Sabbath, anathema and awful denunciations have issued forth.”

To these denunciations the people who were yet undismayed returned such noble remonstrances as this, which was sent to the parish priest of Clontibret :—

“We tell you, reverend sir, that your mode of arguing with us will not now do. *We will not renounce the Bible*—it is the sacred Word of the Lord ; ‘we will hide it in our hearts’—‘it was written for our learning’—it is ‘able to make us wise unto salvation ;’ therefore we regard not your threatenings, your curses, or excommunications.”

Struck with the fearful nature of such unchristian and anti-Scriptural proceedings as those protested against, several of the masters who held sentiments so decided as the above, without delay joined the Protestant Church. The Rev. Mr. Daly, now Bishop of Cashel—and then, as now, a pious and noble Reformer—who enrolled them as

members of the Church, announces their reception in the following words :—

“I have just returned from the most gratifying duty of preaching and administering the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, in the Church of Syddan, in the county of Meath, to twenty-five of our Irish masters—I trust, men of God, not only converted from the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, but converted to God by a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There were, I understand, about one hundred in that side of the Kingscourt district, who were anxious to receive the Sacrament ; but, as much persecution awaits those who take such a decided step, it was thought better to begin with only a few tried men, of whom we have no doubt that they will, through grace, be faithful even unto death. We are to have a quarterly Sacrament for the Irish ; and, at the next communion, we hope to receive many more.”

To bring this Society’s labours regularly down to the year 1840, I shall quote some passages from a superintendent’s letter of that date, recorded in *Mason’s History* :—

“Taking Kingscourt as a central point, your schools have from it extended over parts of eleven counties, eastward and westward, reaching to the sea ; northward, by the mountains of Monaghan, Tyrone, and Derry, to the barony of Innishowen. During these last eighteen years, in this district and its branches, you have had in actual operation upwards of fifteen hundred Irish Scriptural schools ; in these schools, during that period, on the smallest computation, at least a hundred thousand Roman Catholics have been brought into contact with the Scriptures. In one branch of this district, from opposition and persecution, more than a hundred of our poor men emigrated to America ; these were all virtually Protestants ; they took with them a large supply of both Irish and English Scriptures ; and some who have gone thither (as I was informed by their friends) have been employed by *Quaker gentlemen*, and, under their auspices, are, at this moment, teaching the Irish Scriptures to their fellow-countrymen. Some of our teachers are located in England, and several who came out from Popery are employed at present in Scotland, to instruct the Irish there. A number of our converts have also died, attended in their latter moments by clergymen of the Established Church.

“If further evidence for the efficiency and success of your schools *here* were required, I would adduce as proof the deter-

mined, continued, and unanimous hostility of the priesthood ; they have felt and fear the results of Bible education ; they are conscious that Romanism must either put down the Bible, or the Bible it—hence their bitter opposition. At no previous period have our poor men been exposed to more severe and various opposition.”

Protestants as well as Romanists, through a certain indefinite suspicion retarded the good work by every means. This lamentable and almost unintelligible hindrance on the part of Protestants prevailed widely and seriously long. Ministers, solemnly sworn to uphold true Christianity, to preach the Word to every creature, and to eradicate error, looked scornfully on ! Could the flock directly do more than the minister did and taught ? The prelacy was callous, to a similar extent, save a few most noble and illustrious exceptions. At the head of the present prelatie labourers I should place the uncompromising evangelist, the invaluable Bishop Daly, and the high-minded and beneficent Bishop Plunket.

VENTRY, some few miles distant from Dingle, opened a blessed prospect to missionary operations in 1838. The Rev. Mr. Moriarty, a respectable native, who was once an inveterate foe to Protestantism, having been satisfied as to the errors of Rome and the truths of Irish Catholicity, was formally qualified for ordination, and sent as curate to the mission. The foundation of a new church was laid there in the November of 1838. A gentleman who was present furnished this account of the event:—

“A few friends were invited to witness it ; a meeting of the Irish masters was also called to assemble at the new school-house on the same day, both for examination, and to be spectators of the ceremony. We left home before one o’clock ; and, as we came near, we saw the expectant groups on the rising ground before us. Every one and every thing wore a cheerful aspect ; we adjourned to the new school-house ; this had not as yet been formally opened. While standing at the entrance, our attention was attracted by a column of children advancing towards us, about sixty in number, two by two, with Mr. Moriarty at their head, who was conducting the little ones from the old school-house to the new and more commodious one intended

for their future accommodation. The school-house soon filled ; it was calculated that 400 were in the house—of them about 250 were converts—from thirty to forty Roman Catholics, and the remainder Protestants. Mr. Moriarty opened with a hymn—‘Guide us, O thou great Jehovah!’—and prayer from the liturgy, both in the Irish tongue, and joined in by several of the converts. After this he examined some of the masters, and addressed the meeting in Irish at considerable length.”

Mr. Moriarty’s brother, also a convert, speaks thus of a visit to the Blasquet Islands, on the Kerry coast:—

“Truly, the scene I witnessed there was a happy one. My brother baptizing in Irish a child belonging to one of the island converts, and thirty-eight of the islanders present—persons who would, three years ago, have cast myself and my brother, had we told them the truth as we did this day, over some of the many wild cliffs that surround the island. It was, indeed, encouraging to us, who knew them in their wildest state, to find three large families who have completely shaken off Popery, and are now anxious to be placed under the teaching of our Church, besides a general spirit of inquiry being apparent in the minds of all we conversed with. Since January twelve months they care not for the priest, as he then cursed them for seven generations by land and sea, on account of their receiving us on the island ; and he told them that their potato crop would fail, and they would catch no fish ; but it so happened, that they had that season the best crop they had for many years, and caught more fish than they had done for the last ten years.”

Almost all the coast islands were similarly circumstanced with respect to Reformation. In the mainland persecution was terrific beyond description, yet varying. Progress was, therefore, uncertain and indefinite, unless in those localities indicated, where Reformation took root, and bore all tribulation with an abiding confidence.

I have now to describe a most interesting mission settlement, THE ACHILL COLONY. In point of order I should have introduced it, perhaps, at an earlier stage of my narrative. It will, however, lose nothing by the accidental transposition.

Achill is a very extensive and beautiful island, west of Mayo. A tourist, who visited there in the summer of 1830, gives such an alarming picture of the pre-

vailing depravity and superstition as to leave poor hopes for penetrating both with Gospel truth. Priestcraft ruled with despotic sway. No matter what was needed, for the temporal or spiritual wants of the people, masses, or other such Roman Catholic *recipe* for all calamities, were greedily and devoutly had recourse to. Even more than on the mainland, the efficacy of these "rites and ceremonies" was relied on. Anything even identified with them was talismanic. An ordinary incident will explain this:—One boisterous Monday morning towards the end of December, a boat, which plied from the island to the mainland shore, was prevented from leaving its moorings by the fierceness of the storm. Nothing in the shape of money could tempt the owner or his boy to try the passage. A guinea was offered by a gentleman who badly wanted to cross over. No; the ferrymen were afraid. This gentleman waited a little while in a hut not far from the bay. The storm increased, and no chance seemed likely to offer itself for a passage that day at least. After all hopes had vanished, the gentleman rose to return to his hotel. He saw a man approach, with a bundle on his back, and hail the ferrymen. They came to him, but told him familiarly not to expect that they would go out in that weather. "What!" he exclaimed, "not go out, and I having all the altar clothes, the stone and all, and Father Patt waiting for me at Mr. ——'s to say mass; and you know you'll be doing a good work." "Have you the clothes of the blessed sacrament?" inquired the elder boatman. "Yes, to be sure, man, and the very crumbs of his blessed body are on it yet. Sure you could not dread anything with them on board." "Never mind! that's enough. Tom, come out." And out they sallied. The anxious stranger was now sure of a passage, and with great delight joined the priest's clerk, "holy vestments, stone, and all." When they were ready to step into the boat, and he made a motion to do so, the old sailor cried out, "hold hard, sir—you were not at mass yesterday. I saw you pass by the chapel, and not even take off your hat, and no Protestant could bring luck such a day as this." The tra-

veller remonstrated, and reminded them that if the talisman they had against danger was of any worth, it could not be damaged by his presence. All was in vain. Off they went—behind he was left. Now, I do not yield to any loose notions upon the designs of Providence, but I was not surprised when my respectable informant told me that the sailors, “holy vestments and all,” perished.

Few of my readers are unacquainted with a practice very prevalent in this fishing island, as it is at a more famous district not far from it—I mean that of offering masses in the season for large takes of fish. One fisherman may be richer than another, therefore he gloried in the idea of paying for a greater number of masses, and, of course, expected the largest supply of fish. It often occurred that terrific disputes, ending in manslaughter, arose out of these mass-sayings. For instance, many fishermen were so poor as not to be able to pay the stipulated sum for masses. But in order not to lose some part of the benefits, they were in the habit of tying, over water, if not observed, and under water, if practicable, ropes to the boats whereon mass was being said, in order that, as it were by electric communication, they might get some stray blessing. When these contrivances were discovered by the persons paying for the masses, cruel disputes followed, and they often soundly trounced the “thieves,” who, in this way, sought to deprive them of the thorough benefit of that for which they paid. One poor man, now a convert, told me that he caught a much larger share of fish the year he had no masses said than he took those years when he had a dozen offered to catch plenty.

It was to this dreadfully degraded isle that the Rev. Edward Nangle made a charitable visit, in 1831, with no other definite intention than to alleviate the distress which a famine had produced. He was struck with the awful spiritual gloominess of the locality, while he wondered at its natural magnificence. He felt that the beautiful Clew Bay could be cleansed from the mist of error which pressed upon it, and that the picturesque Croaghpatrick may be made to resound with

the glorious echo of truth, instead of the hum of superstition. He knew that the fine mountain scenery of Erris was of God's handiwork, and might be to the delight of His true worshippers. The whole island scenery broadly contrasted with the religious feelings of its inhabitants. He conceived the noble notion of elevating them more to harmony;—although evidently alike in God's favour, and bearing his divine impress, they yet differed too much. Surely it was religious philanthropy that suggested the commencement of a Reformation in a terribly wild, but naturally rich and beautiful district, chained by unnatural poverty. Mr. Nangle pictured to himself the reigning religion eradicated, and truth proclaimed; and then, as consequent upon this change, the dismal desolation vanished—roofless cottages made whole, their black walls whitened, and their fireless and lonely hearths renovated and enlivened. Comfortable cottages would spring up in the place of wretched hovels. Industry instead of indolence, intelligence and morality instead of ignorance and vice. The beauties of nature around would then be no longer mocked by the despicableness of him whom poets call nature's lord. It was an idea to excite the spirit of a Christian minister, and it succeeded.

The pious clergyman who witnessed these scenes, and must have made reflections of this kind, returned to Dublin, and communicated his feelings to those who were already devoted to the missionary cause. They not only sympathised with him, but exerted themselves, to prove that they did so. A committee was immediately formed, and a missionary settlement opened. The first step taken, after sufficient arrangements were made, was the purchase, for a nominal sum, by lease, of 130 acres of land, towards the north-east of the island. This was easily accomplished. The owner of the isle made, in jest, a great proposal, which was accepted in earnest by Mr. Nangle. A proper steward was engaged to superintend the reclaiming of this district, and commenced his labours in the summer of 1833. The wild and neglected beauties of the isle, the culture which nature's self had formed, were all to be made subservient to the use and

comfort of man. The difficulty towards the completion of this necessary labour was made mighty by the people only possessing a total want of skill, industrial habits, and requisite implements. Add to this the constantly employed hindrance to any attempt at the reformation of the habits or position of the Irish-priestly-excited prejudices. Knowing that these were all to be combated, preparation was made for the encounter. So great had been the care and caution to that end that, before the end of 1833, the farm was well inclosed, a house erected for the accommodation of two families, and a school-master and Scripture-reader located in the district. In the August of the following year a clergyman took charge of the infant mission; he was accompanied by three Scripture-readers, and the operations then really extended. Persecution was the necessary, and therefore the not unexpected, consequence. In no part of the world where Christ crucified was preached did the glad tidings spread without having called forth anger and hatred. Achill was not an exception. He who is called by his own party "The Lion of the fold of Judah," and by those who have experienced his power and abilities, "The wolf of the tribe of Judas"—he, Dr. John MacHale, mustered a regular crusade against the mission. It was quite natural that he should seek the total expulsion of those who preached down the religion of gold, and told "the truth as it is in Jesus." His "prophetic soul" saw fishermen no longer a-paying for masses, or fighting for their doubtful benefits; he beheld, in the prospect of success to the Gospel, emptiness to his pomp and purse. No more prostrations before this demi-godship—no more unquestioning acquiescence to his "infallible" command would be given by those who read the Bible. Little wonder that he could not endure this bleak "look out." He did not, only just as did its more sable foe. By all the vigour his influence and power possessed he worked. Denunciations and cursings burst out in every variety of enmity. The horrid scenes already hinted at, as characterising the anti-Reformation movement on the mainland, were enacted in Achill.

Nevertheless, God's Gospel made way. In a letter addressed to Lord J. Russell by the Rev. E. Nangle, the clergyman who brought the light to shine upon the gloom of this lone island, the persecution is fairly described, and some other facts connected with the mission given. I therefore quote some passages from it:—

“The oversight of the spiritual concerns of the infant settlement was entrusted to me, with the full approbation of his Grace the Archbishop of Tuam; and, being fully persuaded that the religion taught by Roman Catholic priests differs in essential principles from the ancient Catholic faith delivered by Christ and his inspired Apostles, I felt it to be my duty, both as a Christian and a minister of our national Church, to testify against doctrines which I believed to be impious innovations; and I rejoiced that, in fulfilling what seemed to me to be a plain duty, I should not be excluded from the protecting care of a constitution which secures liberty of conscience to professing Christians of every denomination. It pleased God to grant such a blessing to our exertions, that several families and individuals abandoned the communion of the Church of Rome, and connected themselves with us as members of the Protestant Church. No exertions were spared by the Roman Catholic priests to exasperate the peasantry (who were disposed to regard us with the kindest feelings) against us, and to urge them on to such repeated acts of violence as might exhaust our patience or our courage, and oblige us at last to abandon our post in the island.

Finding that the means which the priests had employed to arrest the progress of the Protestant religion had failed of success, Dr. MacHale visited the island at the beginning of this month, hoping that the exercise of the spiritual authority with which the ignorant peasantry supposed him to be invested, might prove more effectual. The day after the bishop's arrival, the congregation were assembled at the parish chapel; the persons who had joined the Protestant Church were held up to abhorrence in the strongest terms which language could furnish; and their neighbours were forbidden to speak to them, or sell them provisions, or show them any kindness. ‘Show no kindness to those who differ from you in their religious opinions; withhold from them the commonest courtesies of life; they are accursed of God and his Church, and they should be abhorred by you; put them in coventry; shame them into a profession of Popery; and if that won't do, starve them into a hypocritical conformity.’ Before Dr. MacHale left the island, these inhuman injunctions were again repeated, and a solemn curse pronounced against any one who dared to violate them. In consequence of this, our poor people

have been subjected to much inconvenience, and have sustained much loss. Their kind salutations of their former friends meet no return. The stream of social kindness has been embittered at its source by the gall and wormwood of religious rancour. Some of these faithful sufferers for conscience sake have been ejected from their dwellings—their neighbours alleging no reason for conduct so much at variance with the redeeming virtue of Irish character, but the will of the bishop. Others have been obliged, at considerable cost and inconvenience, to purchase provisions in a distant village: for though there are some of their neighbours whose good-nature is stronger than their fear of Dr. MacHale's curse, yet they dare not sell them potatoes, as a rumour is already gone out among the people, that any one who violates the bishop's orders may expect to have his cattle houghed, and to suffer other injuries in his property and person.

“Such, my lord, are the means by which Romish ecclesiastics maintain their influence over the Irish peasantry. Liberty of conscience in those parts of the country where Popery preponderates, is but a name; the iron of spiritual bondage enters into the soul of the people. In this island there are many who abhor the doctrines of the Church of Rome—who loathe the thought of giving the honour which is due to God to the pastry idol of the mass; but they dare not break the chains which gall their spirit; they sigh for freedom, but the fear of the driver's lash restrains them from claiming their birthright. I must remind your lordship, that I am prepared to prove the facts which I have stated, by competent witnesses, before any tribunal; and I do most earnestly desire, that an opportunity of doing so may be afforded me, in order, that if at a future period the inhabitants of Achill should swell the catalogue of our national atrocities, the British public may trace their crimes, not to any peculiar depravity in them, but to the baneful influence of Popery and its teachers.”

At the time I write the Achill missionary settlement has grown into a handsome and considerably sized village. The sterility and wildness of the soil seem to have passed away. Nature's beauties are enhanced by the care and diligence which are manifest in all the labour about it. The once heathery mountains have become furrowed oaten fields, and all the misery which the island's people possessed is, in short, if not totally gone, materially lessened. The picture which, in 1833, the enthusiast painted, has come out in colours of reality a little less bright than was that of his mental creation. He at first felt, he now knows by experience, “that

prayer and pains, through faith in Christ, can do *anything*."

Instead of a few coast-guard Protestants placed there by accident—which were the only professing Irish Catholics in the island before Mr. Nangle settled himself as missionary there—the number of Protestants is now reckoned by hundreds. There were, up to very lately, evangelising agencies under three clergymen. The Society for *Irish Church Missions* has, this year, taken up the entire Spiritual department of the operations. The clerical missionaries have, by that society, been increased; several additions have also been made to the staff of Scripture-readers. The schools, of which there are in the mission twenty-nine, are now conducted on the plan which distinguishes that admirable society, of which, in the proper place, I purpose speaking fully. To these schools better than 1,800 children resort for an education that enables them to combat the world and its evils. There are forty-one agents labouring on the mission.

In the secular department of this colony—with which the Society for *Irish Church Missions* is not connected, because of its inflexible rule to have no part in the bestowal of temporal relief or supplies—are included a dispensary, hospital, farming, printing-office, building, and several other works connected with a colony. The buildings which form this colony, as they now stand, are arranged so as to shape a triangle. They are substantial, tasteful and clean. A mountain called Slievmore rises beautifully at one side of this pretty village, and gives its aspect a peculiar charm. The ground within, and for a distance without the colony, has been all reclaimed, and is now profitable. The chapel is exceedingly plain, but commodious, and is capable of containing, as has been often witnessed within it, four hundred persons. It requires to be enlarged. A happy change from the time when there was no necessity for a church! The converts' cottages are nicely grouped here and there, and the whole presents a most agreeable scene.

In this once spiritually enthralled island the gloomy and paining bondage is burst. From end to end, from

creek to creek, the priests' power is shaken. Roman Catholic chapels are grass-grown. Irish Catholic Churches are daily erecting—even while I write one is being prepared for consecration at the Achill Sound. The Word of Life, so long withheld from the people, has, now that it is given to them, animated them with a new existence, new ideas, new manners, new feelings. Fighting for masses, or other such things, has ceased. The semi-barbarous appearance of bare-headed and bare-footed, if not half-naked men and women, has almost disappeared. The disgusting laziness which would suffer children to remain sewed up for a whole year in dirty rags, rather than have the trouble of cleaning or removing them, is departing. God is, in these changes, manifesting his special presence at his own sacred labours. Be He always with it here!

The noble Bishop of Tuam, in 1849, confirmed at Achill 400 persons, of whom twenty-eight were originally Protestants. The entire population of the island is about 6,000 beings. It contains better than 36,000 acres of land, chiefly neglected, but reclaimable. If the Gospel influence extends in the rate it has done since Mr. Nangle's providential visit, no one can doubt the beneficial result that will arise to Achill in a few years. Under the auspices of the *Irish Church Mission Society* this expectation is the more certain of fulfilment. In the July of the present year fresh evidence was given of the great progress making. The new church at Achill Sound having been consecrated by the Lord Bishop, 167 converts were confirmed in it. On the following day the foundation-stone of another new church was laid by his lordship. Heaven prosper, for Achill as for Ireland, the cause which has proved itself, always and in all places, calculated to elevate the religious, social and moral condition of men.

CHAPTER XI.

(FROM THE YEAR 1840 TO 1846.)

CLERICAL ENERGY AROUSED—ENSLAVING SUPERSTITION SMITTEN—CHRIST'S CAUSE IN EFFECT.

And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying, Take the girdle that thou hast got, which is upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock.—*Jer.* xiii. 3-4. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.—*Philip.* i. 29. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.—1 *Peter*, iii. 17.

TRULY has it been observed that, until within the last half-century, there had been in Ireland no real attempt at Reformation. History fully sustains the justice of that remark. The clergy of this country were, as a body, indolent, and the result of that indolence is stamped upon poor Ireland at the present moment. Men wonder why this country has remained unevangelised, while it has been so long a time under the auspices of a large "ministerial staff." But those who feel this amazement do not inquire what efforts for that end were ever made by that staff, as they are pleased to call it. Then would at once cease astonishment, and in its stead would first grow up indignation for the almost universal apathy, then pity for Ireland under the past indifference, and hope for her under a different treatment in future. Perhaps, not the least distressing discovery that would appear to an inquirer into the state of Ireland's Church since the party of the Reformation stood hostilely arrayed against the *post-tridentine* Church of Rome, would be this—that when individuals struggled to propagate the principles of that Reformation, they were discountenanced or disempowered by those in authority. No opportunity was given the well-inclined

to develop the Church's power for spiritual good, while they delivered *it* into the hands of those who were likely to frustrate its holiest efforts. Little wonder, then, that the priestly agencies of Rome cultivated and secured the sympathies of the people so abandoned. Little wonder, then, that in Ireland the national and the papal became identical; and that, on this deep basis was founded the antagonistic spirit which actuated, until very lately, the really national, but not the papal party, and the thoroughly papal, but nominally national party. Little wonder that the grossest ignorance defiled this otherwise bounteous and beautiful island. Little wonder that the woful crimes of a country lost to Christ in all but name, called down the vengeance of heaven: "Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send *famine* upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it."

—*Ezek.* xiv. 13. Great were the evils which the drowsy watchmen of the Lord suffered to creep into His pasturage. They became so repulsive to the vineyard's Master that His anger was declared in the practical vengeance which that text mentions. Famine, on several occasions, bore the depth of the Almighty's anger to the people of Ireland.

Moved by sacred impulses, and reminded of the neglected cause by the visible curse, the ministers labouring within the last half-century, have, for the most part, shaken off the lethargy of their predecessors. Do not the operations of the Irish Society express their earnest determination to reclaim the dismal waste? Have not the exertions of several smaller but kindred institutions, of which I have written, spoken out explicitly the dawning of real efforts to evangelise Ireland? Is there nothing significant in the proceedings at Dingle and Achill? Can the venerable and pious Dean Murray relate anything illustrative of this? Yes! truly so. Every effort since 1816 has been given with hearty strength, and in the right direction. The State, which so long had trammelled the Church, has been now forced to declare that the Irish clergy of the present generation "*are absolutely incor-*

ruptible." No inducement can deter the majority of that noble body *now* from proclaiming, and acting upon its right to perform the duties, for which it was ordained. They have, on this account, been subject to petty persecution, to diminution of incomes, to many species of annoyance, even from that power which admits their merits;—they bear all with becoming fortitude for His sake for whose cause alone they care. But I must permit facts to speak for themselves.

My narrative has now brought me to the period of Ireland's Church history within my own knowledge. Of course, I omit, as it would be impossible to do otherwise, every consecutive incident which happened from the opening of the new Reformation to the present day. Those appearing to me of interest or importance have been noted. I have still to detail the effective labours of one of the most important Societies yet formed to achieve the great work now, with God's blessing, approaching its climax. I have also to record some recent operations of other societies. The narration of these facts will, doubtless, be more acceptable to the reader, as it will be easier to me, than lengthened censures on past negligence, or just encomiums on present exertions. As occasion offers, however, neither one nor the other shall be treated with indifference.

I think here, with propriety, allusion may be made to the several causes which had, providentially, combined to aid the labours already set on foot, and to encourage fresh exertions. After the check sustained by the movement upon the granting of Emancipation, there was a sort of deceptive calm. This was broken in upon by O'Connell and the Repeal agitation. People became debaters, and that naturally made them, to a certain extent, resort to private judgment. In politics such was strictly the case. But when a Bible-reader "turned up;" as one frequently did, the habit acquired in politics made the people inclined to argue with him. The good effect of this was not immediate, but it was not the less sure. It is a well-ascertained fact that if you create one solitary doubt in a Roman Catholic's mind, he is

soon thoroughly undeceived. This doubt may, and many of them did, arise from detecting the deceptions of the political chieftains of their party. O'Connell's vast influence was greatly lowered by the shallowness of some of his deceits. Often I heard a pledge that was not likely to be kept compared to "Dan O'Connell's boasting promises, always vanishing, and never caught."

The supernatural agency which was said to work on Rome's behalf also yielded its mite to undo the system which it was forged to uphold. Few but have heard of the marvels ascribed, by such staid Romish prelates as Doyle and Murray, to the German Prince Hohenlohe. These miracles failed before investigation, and were shown up as horrible impostures. Even to Roman Catholics they appeared too empirical. One shrewd Romanist tartly observed, upon being told of the wonders of Hohenlohe: "Tut man, they are not disguised with sufficient dexterity." The "miracles" rather injured than served Rome's cause. This fact soon warned her to be more cautious, so she carefully let the curtain drop, and, unless at Rimini, she has not since exhibited them. The Rimini affair would have better pleased her if it lay concealed for ever in the fervid brain of its ingenious deviser.

Almost cotemporary with the Prince-miracle-maker lived, having no better success, the parody-prophet Pastorini. This worthy genius predicted the general extirpation of Protestantism, and the particular destruction of the English Church. Papal zealots in Ireland gloried in the prospect, and pointed the finger of triumph at the passing heretic, destined for nearly instant ruin. The prophet was, however, devoid of cunning, as he actually named a special year for the fulfilment of his prophecies. The first year was 1817. Well, what event then seemed pregnant with our Church's doom? Perhaps the Irish Society, which was then a year old! 1818, 1821, and 1825 came—each expected to be the lucky term. But it is rather remarkable that during these years was being sowed in several parts of Ireland the seed of Reformation, which has since flourished. This prophecy was

“going,” as Irishmen say dreams do, “by contraries.” When 1825 had passed, the sagacious O’Connell announced that in 1829 the prediction was surely to be fulfilled! In that year, truly, a notable event occurred; but the Church has since that time been daily growing more alive to its position, and seems at present likely to turn the prophecy into the fashion of dreams.

Here, as a set-off to the promised downward tendency of the Church, I may notice the great progress of the Establishment since 1700. In that year the number of episcopal churches throughout the country was 492; in 1800, they had increased to 626; in 1832, to 1100; and in 1848, they numbered 1354. Now they are far more numerous. That is very unlike a process of demolition!

During all this time two other serious advantages were gained upon the Church of Rome. The very year which ushered into life the *Irish Society* witnessed the production of a Douay Bible. The publication of this Book, with the annotations attached, which were deemed so flagitious as to call forth the public repudiation of Dr. Troy and O’Connell, produced controversy. Romanists had a Bible, and boasted of it. Possessing it, they imagined that they ought, in some sort, even clandestinely, to use it. So they did, and to that extent conceded one great Protestant principle.

Having gained an unusual importance and power by the Emancipation and Reform Bills, the Romish party became particularly vexatious, and more dissatisfied than ever. It must be recollected that in originating these vexations or dissatisfactions, the laity have nothing on earth to do. They are the mere, but willing, tools of the priests, who truly, since the Union, as before it, caused great confusion in the social, political, and religious state of Ireland. The moral condition was very little disturbed—remaining in its corrupt stagnancy, waiting, as it were, the result of the other struggles at issue. But as I have intimated, such disruptions were the harbingers in some instances, and in others the direct means, of the change these some years taking

place. Protestantism became so aroused on behalf of its sacred principles, and Romanism so much afraid not to make an effort at holding ground, that, in 1827, Pope, on the part of Ireland, and Maguire, on that of Rome, were deputed to fight a theological battle. They met, and brought to the encounter honesty of purpose and Christian forbearance; much good resulted to the Reformation from this now celebrated discussion.

After the termination of that apostolical mode of warfare, Rome resumed her ordinary activity—political agitation. Not so Protestantism. From the press, pulpit, and platform, were discussed the great topics of vital Christianity. Again, in 1838—just thirty years after the execrable principles of Dens' *Theology* became class theories for Romish priests—the Rev. T. D. Gregg was met by the famous, and almost only controversial champion of "Mother Church," Father Tom Maguire. This far-famed discussion ended in the complete discomfiture of Rome's defender. Since his overthrow no other champion has been entrusted with her unwieldy cause—not from want of *pressing* opportunities, as shall soon be seen.

Rome's tactics became henceforth changed. Silence on all religious matters controverted was strictly inculcated. That it was a *mortal* sin to *doubt* an article of faith, was continually paraded before the eyes of the "faithful." In this way "Mother Church" hoped to stifle the inquiry that was extending. She did so for the moment, but only for the moment. Some of those whom the great uneasiness of their flocks urged into the pulpit on the forbidden theme—controversy—in searching for arguments to prop their cause, became enlightened themselves, and renounced a system which fell to pieces on being tested. These occurrences rendered it necessary for Rome to forbid controversy *altogether*, except a "trifle" on Good Friday or Holy Thursday. That such a measure is not unwise on her part, I readily conceive. Discussion ever thins her ranks. No one knows that better than Rome, for she has felt it. But I am quite convinced that the natural dispositions of men will not

permit them to remain always in that sort of bondage without knowing why. Never was this fact so truly illustrated as at the present time.

I here propose to bring the narrative of one of the chief agencies—the *Irish Society*—which we have accompanied for about thirty years, to a point.

That noble society made several successful, and many other truly laudable, though not equally effective efforts to obtain a footing in other districts besides those named. Causes I am now not prepared to examine, frustrated its permanent exertions in some districts where it opened promising missions. But these failures are outweighed by many glorious successes. One great advantage which is felt to have been the result of what might be looked upon as failures, is this :—where the seed was then sown, but made no budding, it now, under fresh culture, flourishes. Thus, the apparent failures are not such in reality. God's cause is worked by an inscrutable machinery. Where we cannot clearly comprehend the prosperity of its operations, we should be slow in accounting for their backwardness. Experience has, besides, imparted this lesson, that, what may at first be regarded as disasters, turn out ultimately to be the opposite.

The labour of this godly society at Kingscourt yet maintains the divine impress in its most marked shape. Dingle has sprung, from its fosterage, into a full-grown and healthy colony. Ventry speaks now, in unfailing maturity, the sacred words which it was long since taught to lisp. Kerry, to a certain extent, praises God with pure piety, through its care. Cork, too, as I shall hereafter show, promotes God's honour in genuine Christianity by its efforts. Clare, at length, after a lingering and varying resistance, begins now to appreciate those truths, which come from God's goodness, and through the Irish Bible. So also in other places.

Here I have to introduce the reader to an alteration in the general rules, prompted by an unforeseen emergency which the society's labours had created. Carrying out the objects of a resolution passed at the meeting of 1842, it was agreed that the society was—

“To devote £1,000 to the establishment of one or more exhibitions in College, to be held by young men preparing for the ministry, acquainted with the Irish language, and manifesting their reception of the doctrines contained in the Liturgy and Articles of the Church of England and Ireland.”

The foundation of the “Bedell Scholarship” in Trinity College, Dublin, and the opening of a school at Ventry for Irish-speaking youths, with the view of preparing them for the ministry, were the first fruits of this proceeding. Since then, Ballinasloe has been selected as another seminary, with a like intent, and other important results of that seasonable change have been matured.

As an evidence of the steady and peculiar course of the society’s labours, not only in the south, but in the north-east, I shall quote from Mr. Mason’s *History*, these passages, which occur in a superintendent’s letter, written in 1842:—

“About four months ago, an old man, of seventy-five years of age, was in the habit of attacking one of our female teachers on the score of her Bible reading, warning her of her danger, and assuring her that she was on the high road to hell and destruction. In spring last she met this man on the road, who, as usual, commenced abusing her; when she asked him, for the tenth time, how he came to speak against the thing of which he knew nothing, and begged permission to read a wee bit out of this condemned book. At length he consented, saying that he would just listen to her for this once, in return for which he hoped she would give it up for ever. Down they sat upon the road-side, and———, drawing forth her Irish Testament, commenced reading the first chapter of John’s Gospel, to which the old man listened with great attention. When it was concluded— ‘Now,———,’ said she, ‘what do you think of that?’ ‘Go on, jewel,’ said the old man, ‘I’ll listen to a little more.’ She then read the second chapter of the same Gospel, and appealed to him the second time for his opinion. ‘You may read another, jewel,’ said he, ‘I’m not tired yet.’ She then read the third chapter, and, closing the book, asked him if he would advise her to stop teaching. ‘In troth, ———,’ said he, ‘I would advise no such thing; but if you will teach me, with God’s blessing, I’ll learn to read it myself.’ From that day forward the old man came regularly to her house for instruction; and he is now able to read a chapter himself, although when he began he knew not his letters, in his seventy-fifth year. A river lies between his

house and ———'s, over which the pupil has to pass; and sometimes the floods swell the river so much; and he being lame, when he comes to the edge he stands hallooing to her husband to come down and carry him across the river, until he gets his lesson, which he hardly ever neglects."

In such manner the society exercised the benefits it had to bestow, and they were thus borne into every quarter of the kingdom; in some, of course, prevailing less than in others. The famed Lough Derg had all its superstitions dismayed by having in its vicinity an Irish Society station, at a place called Pettigo. This station—so truly antagonistic to that called St. Patrick's Purgatory, held at the lough—produced much good, and rescued many souls from the malady which the irreligion of Rome, encouraged in that place, makes especially awful. The man-degrading and God-dishonouring ceremonies performed on this lough, called forth the annexed clause in an enactment passed in Queen Anne's time. It shows the dismal prevalence, and the not only morally, but physically dangerous tendencies of such assemblies:—

"Whereas the superstitions of Popery are greatly increased and upheld by the pretended sanctity of places, especially of a place called Saint Patrick's Purgatory, in the county of Donegal, and of wells, to which pilgrimages are made by vast numbers at certain seasons, by which not only the peace of the public is greatly disturbed, but the safety of the government also hazarded, by the riotous and unlawful assembling together of many thousands of Papists to the said wells and other places; be it further enacted, that all such meetings and assemblies shall be deemed and adjudged riotous and unlawful assemblies, and punishable as such, in all or any persons meeting at such places as aforesaid. And all sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other magistrates, are hereby required to be diligent in putting the laws in force against all offenders, in the above particulars, in due execution."—*2nd sec. c. vi.*

In another portion of this statute the danger is more explicitly pointed out:—

"That every person convicted of meeting or assembling at St. Patrick's Purgatory aforesaid, or at any such well or place,

contrary to this act, shall forfeit ten shillings, or in default of payment be publicly whipped; and persons convicted of *building booths, selling ale*, victuals, or *other* commodities, shall forfeit twenty shillings, and in default of payment be imprisoned; and the magistrates are required to demolish all crosses, pictures, and inscriptions, that are anywhere publicly set up, and are the occasions of Popish superstitions."

It may be desirable to give a description of the scenes adverted to in the above extracts. I shall, therefore, quote from the pen of one already made honourable mention of in these pages, the Rev. John Richardson, of Belturbet, this account, which he published in the year 1727 :—

"As soon as the pilgrims come within sight of the holy island, they pull off their shoes and stockings, and uncover their heads, and walk with their beads in one hand, and sometimes a cross in the other, to the lake-side, from whence they are wafted over, paying every one sixpence for their freight.

"After landing, they go immediately to the prior, or titular priest of the parish, and humbly ask his blessing; and then to St. Patrick's altar, where, kneeling down, they say one pater, one ave, and one creed.

"Then, beginning at a corner of the chapel, they walk round it and St. Patrick's altar seven times, saying a decade; that is, ten ave Marys and one pater-noster every round. In their first and last circuit they kiss the cross that is before the chapel, and touch it with their shoulders the last circuit.

"Next, they go to the penitential beds, every one of which they surround thrice, outwardly saying three paters, three aves, and one creed; then kneeling, they say three paters, three aves, and one creed; after which they enter the bed, and circuiting it thrice in the inside, they say three paters, three aves, and one creed; which done, they kneel and say again three paters, three aves, and one creed. All this must be done at each bed.

"Leaving the penal beds, they go into the water, and go round the metamorphosed stones, called Caoranach, thrice, saying, in the meantime, five paters, five aves, and one creed, and then they lean upon the corner of one of them. After that they go further into the water to Cear na suboern, and stand upon it, saying one pater, one ave, and one creed, with their hands lifted up.

"From the water they return to the chapel, where they repeat the Lady's Psalter (which consists of fifty aves, and five paters, and, according to some, of one hundred and fifty aves, and fifteen paters), and thus they finish one station, which must be performed

thrice a-day, about sun-rising, noon, and sun-setting; no other food but bread and water being allowed the pilgrims.

"On the ninth day, the prior puts the pilgrims into the cave, where they are shut up very close for twenty-four hours. During this time all manner of refreshment is kept from them, and they are debarred the liberty of answering the necessities of nature; but, above all things, they are cautioned not to sleep, the prior telling them that the devil will certainly carry them away, as he hath done two caves-full already, if he should catch them napping.

"While they are in the cave they are bound to perform the same tally of devotions as on the preceding days. On the tenth day they are let out, at the same time of the day that they entered; after which they go immediately into the water, and, being stark naked, they wash their whole bodies, and more particularly the head, to signify that they are entirely cleansed from their sins, and that they have broken the dragon's head in the water, and have left their spiritual enemies drowned in the Red Lake, as Moses left the Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea."

A person can hardly forbear expressing his abhorrence, at the maintenance of a practice so demoralising! Even to the present day, that locality is desecrated by such scenes. As can be inferred from the Act, drinking, fighting, &c., terminated the proceedings. They are, I believe, considerably modified, and the ceremonies, though not less superstitious, are made far more peaceful! To the new ideas engendered by the instructions of the Irish Bible-reader, is even this diminution in the evil owing.

It is somewhat singular that in the diocese of Tuam, which produced the men who arranged for publication, in 1602, the Irish Testament, the greatest impediments were exhibited towards the reception of the *Irish Society's* operations. The lodgment made in the west, though promising, was not generally prosperous. God has, however, thought fit, under another society, to make the west a great receptacle of his divine truths. This fact shall be dwelt on in its proper place.

A district which has acquired considerable celebrity, DOON, next presents itself to notice. I have myself a practical intimacy with the people, and peculiar prejudices of that part of the county of Limerick. Three

happy years of my boyhood were spent in a parish adjoining, under the care of a kind and hospitable Roman Catholic priest—for priests can be both.

Doon, in 1844, became especially devoted to the Virgin Mary. In a very short period Cappamore outshone Doon in a similar misdirected zeal. An incident which occurred one Sunday morning, will illustrate the religious inclinations of the people there and then. It is this:—Father Meagher, who was Romish curate of Cappamore, had just said mass, and was returning to breakfast, towards the parish priest's house. I observed a *devotee* of high reputation, with whom I was intimate, walk alone gently after him all along the avenue, with hat under arm, hands clasped, and going through many genuflections. He appeared altogether wrapt in sincere (if right) adoration. When the curate had entered the hall-door, the man, still unnoticed, a small way behind him, made a most profound bow, and went through other acts of dumb-show until the door was shut; then having "blessed" himself, he put on his hat, and retraced his steps. I accosted him, told him what I observed, and asked an explanation. He very good-naturedly and solemnly replied that his act was one of imperative duty, and he would advise me to imitate it; that he followed the priest because he knew "Christ was in his pocket," and to make up for the neglect of others, he had adored his Lord and Master himself in that manner!

The occurrence seemed quite natural; but I could not get out of my mind this simple thought, which I imparted to the devotee:—"Is that *really* the Lord Jesus which the priest throws into his pocket with as little concern as a snuff-box?" That man has since learned that it is not; and he now adores God "in spirit and in truth."

Perhaps no portion of this unfortunate country was more religiously prone to the awfully prevalent superstitions than Doon and its neighbouring parishes. It had gained besides an unenviable notoriety for scenes of bloodshed. The arm of the law was seldom able to reach the murderer, whom it affectionately harboured. No religion

but Rome's could consort with the feelings and prejudices of its people ; therefore, no other faith more near to Christian purity was favoured. Any generous effort to promote, in a proper spirit, the true interests of soul and body, was hooted and rough-handled. He who held the will and, to a certain degree, the destiny of the people, was the priest. At his bidding hill and dale would pour out its countless, half-civilised inmates ; and to his order would that otherwise uncontrollable mass passively shape its actions. Slavery—moral and physical slavery—was endured with amazing satisfaction. The priest of each parish ruled as absolutely within his district as did the most despotic monarch reigning in his. To the priest's call the robber and rebel would leap forth ; by his nod the murderer would be directed to submit to justice or self-outlawry amid his native hills. In short, nothing need be more than half asked or half ordered, by the priest, and it was eagerly given or done by the best and wisest in his parish. He was respected as a being beyond mortal !

To subdue that mighty power may seem impossible. To extend, in the very heart of a thoroughly superstitious district, those religious tenets which are antagonistic to superstition, cannot truly be looked upon as a work for man. God's guiding influence is alone able to exert his truth in such a troublous and abandoned locality. The very vastness and variety of the obstacles will, however, make the effort, and whatever amount of success attended it, as fair a specimen of the Irish Reformation progress as I could select. On that account I slightly allude to its antecedents, that its modern history may be better understood and appreciated.

Towards the close of 1845, the *Irish Society* instructed a Roman Catholic of this dark and stormy district to teach his neighbours the native language, after the manner peculiar to that society. The man at first hesitated to go forth as an avowed teacher of the language under such auspices, the more especially as extracts from God's Word constituted the substance of the lessons he was to give. He took counsel of his priest, who *then* saw nothing objectionable in a man earning "an honest

penny" in a commendable and honest way. He rejoiced in a permission so given from that quarter, and set to work with great industry. Teachers increased and scholars multiplied. Bogs, marshes, and mountains—slated house, thatched cottage, and scraw hovel, echoed and welcomed the accents of truth which were conveyed by the Irish Scriptures thus promulgated. Places where the name of Jesus was heard to be execrated, for the first time received it with devout veneration. Several, both teachers and taught, became a little more than learners of the bare words of God's Book; they inquired into its spirit. Private judgment, brought in this way imperceptibly into action, made them bold and questioning. The priests, naturally, at once concluded that this independence, if permitted to grow, would lead to results damaging to their cause; so, having rescinded the former permission to honestly earn "an honest penny," they denounced the system and all who adhered to it. Wrong to themselves in the first instance, the course they pursued in the second proved to them doubly destructive. Those who might have rested satisfied with the sublime Christian beauties of the Bible were, by being denounced, induced to search how far those "bully priests" preached that Gospel which they so feared. No one can mistake to what such an inquiry, sincerely prosecuted, leads. In Doon, as in all other places, it opened the prison-doors of Rome, and suffered many to breathe the soul-invigorating air of pure Christianity. By the very foes of Reformation God urged on His sacred cause in Doon. The priests commenced the holy movement by attempting to prevent it. Eight men had "come out of Rome" before three years of this sort of teaching and opposition were passed—eight men, in this district so frightfully swayed by priestly influence! It was wonderful. But the change is not to be judged by those who thus fearlessly cast off the yoke; scores were, at the same time, in heart, far away from Rome, but not strong enough in faith to let her see that.

Neither the rector of the parish nor any other clergyman had given countenance, for a considerable time, to

the work thus progressing. The people "came out;" and, it being beyond doubt that conviction could have been their only inducement (nothing but persecution accompanying the act), the rector and others rejoiced in the evidence of a *real* reformation, and, by every effort, aided, at length, in the godly labour—encouraged the timid and instructed the ignorant.

Were I to narrate the scenes of persecution got up by the priests, I should merely repeat a description of atrocities already related, with only the addition of improved refinement in the method of bestowing them. Martyrdom, by the worst of means, has crowned the earthly existence of many persons who openly believed on Christ and Him alone, in Doon.

I may here give a specimen of the kind of converts God had gathered to himself in this district. No man could have acted towards the movement with greater caution, as I have said, than the rector—Rev. Mr. Atkinson. Even after he became slowly convinced of its reality, his watchfulness was excessive, as this case shows, which I produce in his own words, to prove the sincerity of the converts:—

"There was a poor man who had been employed by our committee; but accounts having reached me which caused me to doubt of his sincerity, I had him at once dismissed from his employment. In about three weeks or a month after, that man actually died of starvation. Starvation was brought upon him by the over-jealousy, perhaps, of a Protestant minister; yet he would not have, at his last hour, the parish priest, but sent for a minister of the Gospel."

The cause of truth, thus fully opened, was growing, but very gradually, amidst the most furious persecution on the part of the priests, until the year 1850. The labours of the zealous Rev. E. Ellis, as missionary, some time before that, prepared the way for a spontaneous and large "coming out." Mr. Ellis, now the corresponding missionary of another society, devoted his time and talents then unceasingly to this great local work. He travelled through the district telling of Jesus, conversed with the people upon the value of truth, and

preached incessantly the Gospel of Christ. With his labours may be joined the valuable exertions of the Rev. A. Darby. So deeply had such faithful and indefatigable ministers impressed the people with saving truth, that, in one year (1850), more than two hundred souls sought protection in the true Church. Besides the labourers mentioned which contributed to call these to Christ, I should notice those of our genuine preacher, the Rev. John Gregg, who, with Mr. Foley (now Irish Professor in T.C.D.), announced the Gospel message in the Irish tongue to vast open-air assemblies.

The peculiar out-door meetings I have here mentioned deserve description. From a letter dated May, 1850, I annex Professor Foley's account of one he had just then witnessed :—

“The day has fully realised our expectations, and more than anything we hoped to witness only twelve months since. Six hundred of the peasantry assembled on the hill of Doon—the first open-air meeting I ever held of the Irish teachers and pupils. We read the second and third chapters of the 1st of Timothy, and brought out the important truths therein, and freely exposed Romish corruptions. The whole proceedings lasted nearly four hours. I could not describe the fervour, and zeal, and interest manifested by all, without exception. It was a glorious sight to see so many emancipated in this dark, and formerly disturbed and turbulent place; and to hear us all, including fifty of the Protestant clergy and gentry, singing ‘Salvation! O the joyful sound!’ and praying to the Father of the Lord Jesus together, through the sole mediation of his Son. The priest was invited by letter to come, but did not appear. Their doctrines and deeds were laid bare, and a determination formed and expressed unanimously to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, and to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. This is only the beginning of our progress; the breach is fully made in the wall, the advocates of truth have fully entered, and Popery trembles throughout the neighbourhood.”

Two months after the above interesting scene, the truly venerable Archdeacon of Emly preached in Drumkeen Church, some few miles distant from Doon, to more than three hundred converts. These facts sufficiently indicate the depth and extent of the movement then. They also lead us to look for persecution the

most horrifying from that Church whose only refuge is tyranny—more terrific when invited by such a cause. An idea of what that persecution was, may be obtained from the subjoined extract from a Parliamentary report on the authority of two stipendiary magistrates, C. Hunt and E. G. Bell, Esqrs. :—

“It appears that the Rev. Mr. Hickey, P.P., and the Rev. J. O'Dwyer, C.C., of Doon, felt it to be their duty to warn their flocks from the altar against this movement; and it appears in evidence of Mr. O'Dwyer's witnesses, that they not only did so on various occasions, but went still further, and told the people that it was no harm to hoot and shout; and, on another occasion, told the people to hoot, shout, and groan on those occasions. The natural consequences of these exhortations were, the assembling together of a large number of persons (after mass), at the gate of Kilmoylan House, and on the approach and return of the Rev. Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Ellis (his curate) from divine service, they (the crowd) commenced shouting, hallooing, and calling names, such as ‘cauthbracs,’ ‘dried hake,’ ‘devils,’ &c., &c. This course was repeated Sunday after Sunday; and, on one occasion, a dead cat was thrown into the car of one of the congregation, and a dead fish at Mr. Ellis, while on his car returning from prayers.

“Mr. Ellis summoned some parties for throwing stones at him; but the evidence of identification having failed, the parties charged by Mr. Ellis were acquitted. It was then given out that there was no law against hooting and shouting in large bodies on Sundays, and the meetings increased to such an alarming extent, that on the report of Sub-Inspector Enright, Mr. Bell, R.M., felt it his duty to attend, and with difficulty preserved the peace. This was on the 30th of June last (1850).”

Terrible and endless are the tortures and schemes resorted to by Rome to affright or seduce those who either doubt her doctrines or have already cast them off. In the words of a passage on this subject which appeared in *The Irish Society Record* for last March—

“The labourer and the tradesman have been deprived of employment; the farmer has been rendered unable to cultivate his lands; the father has been separated from his son—the mother from her daughter; the child has been driven from his home by the relentless parent; families have been thrust out of their homes, and compelled to pass the chilling night by the road-side,

under the canopy of heaven, exposed frequently to the pitiless storm. The priest's curse has been pronounced on all who would speak to, or hold intercourse with, the convert. Many have passed the day without food, though with money in their pockets, because that none dared to sell to them the necessities of life."

Not the least disreputable or formidable weapon employed by the priests is:—calumny against the means used to spread the Gospel. Bribery is an accusation continually urged and rebutted. Very recently, Father O'Dwyer, through the Romish journals, made serious, if provable, charges of that sort against the Rev. Mr. Atkinson and his co-operators. Believing it the easiest and most convincing method, Mr. Atkinson challenged the accusing priest to sustain his charge by evidence. To the astonishment of many who know priestly cowardice, the challenge was accepted with apparent eagerness. Liverpool was appointed as the place where, in the presence of an assembly of Christian men, the question should be decided. A day was named. The meeting had collected. The chair was taken. Mr. Atkinson was called for, and came forth. Father O'Dwyer was next called on. A few moments of intense silence pervaded the vast assembly. No answer was given—no proxy appeared. Father O'Dwyer did not come! So ended his calumny—trampled upon, but not unretracted or unrepeatd. So it is with the ebb and flow of the tide of Romish assertions.

The agencies now actively operating in the extensive district of Doon are many and adequate. There are three missionaries besides the local clergymen. These are aided by an Irish inspector and fourteen Scripture-readers. Five schools are in the district, according to the rules of the "Church Education Society." Supplementary to these are *Irish* schools. The members which at present form the different convert congregations of the Doon district, which comprises three parishes, are:—in Doon, three hundred; in Pallasgreen, two hundred; in Tuagh or Cappamore, one hundred and thirty, and many more in the adjoining parishes. It is ascertained

that reckoning all there are now in this large district about eight hundred converts. Adding to that calculation those removed by death, emigration, or other circumstances, the number saved to Christ there within the last four years must have been more than one thousand.

In the month of September, 1851, that zealous Reformer, the Lord Bishop of Cashel, held a confirmation in Drumkeen Church, which belongs to the Doon district. At it two hundred and seventy-four converts were confirmed. The steadfast Romanists were amazed, while the priests were stunned. The fact of a submission to such a searching and solemn rite of our Church proved the extent and stability of the work. The Lord Bishop, writing on the subject to a friend, wrote :—

“ We had, in every sense a most glorious day at Drumkeen. I do trust it was, indeed, a confirmation both of the people and of our hard-working clergy. The priests cannot now deny the fact of the Reformation. There would have been a much larger number, but that I requested the clergymen not to seek for numbers to make a show, but to bring none but those of whom they thought well, and to bring none under fifteen years of age.”

The effect of this glorious, blessed, and signal capture of one of Satan's camps in Ireland, is the destruction of those practices which I have mentioned as characterising the district. Faction-fighting, assassination, and all the other dismal results of ignorance and superstition have disappeared. The priest's once commanding voice may now ring with vehement force, and the only reply it can meet, is its own echo among the cliffs, or the laugh of pity from the cow-herd or plough-boy. His power here, once so vast, is dead, and he knows that. Every sincere well-wisher of Ireland's peace fervently prays, that throughout the land priestly influence may have a similar fate. Recent election events must satisfy the most sceptic, of its injurious qualities.

Another very interesting district which flourishes under the direction of the Irish Society, is CORK.

In that city, about six years ago, no such thing as a “Reformation Movement” was thought of. Controversy

was quite unfashionable. Things were not destined, however, to remain long in that state: for in the year '47, the Rev. J. Woodroffe, then rector of St. Nicholas's, determined to establish, and succeeded in doing so, a class for all inquirers after truth. The people did not at first give much encouragement to this way of dealing with any doubts they may entertain upon religious subjects; but gradually their abject and superstitious obedience to the priests gave way, and from attending the meeting at first, in twos and threes, they began in a little time to muster in numbers of forties and fifties. The errors of the Romish system were for a long time tested in these meetings, before there was any perceptible result, in the way of avowed and actual conversion. The rector, however, persevered. Controversial lectures were delivered, and well attended by Roman Catholics, notwithstanding a most formidable opposition on the part of the priests. Two years afterwards, the Rev. R. Maguire was appointed to the curacy of the parish, and he, in connexion with Mr. Woodroffe, strenuously exerted himself to promote the knowledge of God's Word amongst the Romanists. Lectures became still more frequent and regular. The period of Lent was, as it were, one unintermittent controversial lecture. The hitherto apathetic now began to work, and controversy was no longer generally despised. The priests were frightened into still more active opposition, and they excited the people, who too readily not only vented their fury on the inoffensive hand-bills and placards, but also on the persons of ministers and Scripture-readers. Mr. Maguire was very often "pelted" with stones and mud, and frequently obliged to take shelter for his life: while even the poor Scripture-readers were generally in imminent danger. But worst of all, the unoffending people who showed even a "leaning" to the truth, were deprived of friends and home. In short, every sort of positive or passive persecution, every form and extremity of denunciation and excommunication was resorted to, in order to quell the rising spirit of inquiry. These, Rome's only weapons, however heavy and rigorous, have

not had the power to crush the energies or arrest the progress of the growing Reformation. The schools, indeed, were sometimes thinned for a day or two, after the Sunday's alarm in the chapel, but within the week the children almost uniformly returned.

Thus much of the infancy of the Reformation movement in Cork, and its subsequent progress down to a recent date. Its difficulties have been great, and its progress steady and vigorous. On last year I visited the Reformation Schools in St. Nicholas's parish. The school-room, which is capable of accommodating about 500 persons, is a licensed place of worship, and in it are held the Sunday and weekly services in the Irish language, as well as occasional meetings connected with the Reformation. It is peculiarly gratifying to behold a fine collection of healthy and happy-looking children, listening with delight to the instructions of a minister of Christ ; but what is it to know that these children were, but a short time since, Romanists, and are the sons and daughters of persons who were or are themselves Romanists ! Such was the scene I witnessed. In the class-roll of the Sunday-school are the names of better than one hundred children, and a Sunday average attendance of eighty ; all, without exception, the children of those who are or were Romanists. Besides these, the class-roll contains the names of forty adults, and an average attendance of thirty—all, in like manner, converts from Romanism. This is merely the attendance at the Sunday-school. I visited the daily school for the reformed children on the following day, and was agreeably surprised, having heard so much of the terrific opposition of the priests, to find so large an attendance. The class-roll of the boys' school contains fifty-five names, and the daily attendance is about forty. As a proof of what the children know in religious matters, I will mention one instance out of twenty such. A child named Jerry Hogan, nine years old, was asked by me several questions, but I shall only mention some of his answers. "I am a Protestant because 'tis the right religion ; I know *that* from the Bible, for 'tis God's book ; I wouldn't pray to the blessed virgin, 'cause she couldn't hear me—

she was a sinner herself; she wasn't the mother of God—she was but the mother of Christ's humanity; I wouldn't go to mass for anything—'tis idolatry; I get nothing to go to church; nothing would make me go there if I did not like it; Christ's body can't be in the wafer, because it is in heaven—I know that from the Bible and the Creed.' Thus to every question would this child give immediate and direct answers. All the boys were as prompt in answer. In the girls' school is a daily attendance of about thirty, and the number on the roll is sixty. They, too, can well account for the religion they have adopted. Their religious training is accompanied by an industrial education. They are taught knitting, and other such work as will eventually enable them to earn a decent livelihood.

One respectable convert woman, whose history tells an awful tale for Romanism, said to me, in answer to a question on the subject, that were bribes held out to such as were converts, she for one could not approve of it. This woman, without fee or reward, goes through the city reading the Scriptures. She was enrolled in several Romish orders, and has the badge of each yet. Her husband and children, too, are now, like herself, real Protestants.

The number of Roman Catholics in this city, whose trust in that system in which they were bred has been altogether shaken, is set down at its least when I say it is 200.

Priestly opposition is as active as ever; and though the readers are in some places well received, they are in others molested, and sometimes cruelly treated. If the Society of Vincent de Paul could but be made to suspend, or even to reduce to a moderate scale, its bribing operations, and that commensurate funds for the support of the Gospel movement were supplied, there is no doubt that an immense and rapid progress would be effected in Cork. The Romanists are all alive, while the Protestants there generally seem to think the advancement of God's truth scarcely worth noticing.

For a few weeks in the present year there was an unac-

countable placidity in the polemical proceedings of this district. No progress and no retrogression. One of the mentally deceived Oxonians, known now as Father Marshall, caused a great reaction towards the good cause, by coming to preach there with a widely different purpose. I regret that my space will not allow more than this allusion to the religious occurrences since then. The disgraceful political scenes there lately enacted are well known.

I shall now finally sum up the agency employed at present by the *Irish Society*, whose operations have afforded us so many interesting facts. It supports three clerical agents—one in Ulster and two in Munster; thirty-seven Scripture-readers—two in Ulster, seventeen in Munster, and eighteen in Connaught; and has 667 schools—247 in Ulster, 217 in Munster, and 203 in Connaught. These schools contain over 29,000 scholars, of whom more than 11,000 have passed examination.

Before entering upon the history of the eminently successful operations of that society which at present worthily exercises an impressive, holy, and wonderfully-extended influence over the entire kingdom, I had better sketch the position of some societies yet undescribed. By doing this, I will have given, so far as I know, a complete account of all the other missionary agencies which have laboured, and are labouring, to evangelise Ireland.

First in the list of those yet unnoticed I shall class a society, organised about seven years ago by an amiable Christian lady, ever working with unshaken fidelity in God's cause—Mrs. Col. Inglis, formerly Miss MacMahon. This society, whose first object is *conversion*, and next *protection*, is called, "*The General Irish Reformation Society for the Restoration in Ireland of her Primitive Religion and the Necessary Protection of Converts.*"

The following extract from the present year's Report succinctly details its operations and agency:—

"At the close of 1848 our schools only numbered twelve. This year we have been enabled to aid seventy-four schools, in each of which there are from 16 to 100 children daily taught the Word of God. We employ seventeen Scripture-readers, have distributed tracts and Testaments; have assisted in building

twelve schoolhouses; have given grants to converts from Maynooth, in order to pay their college expenses, and to fit them for preaching that Truth which has made them free; have supplied numerous districts with seed, and enabled distressed converts thus to cultivate their fields and support their families; have relieved many of the persecuted, distressed, and sick, among the converts; have given employment to others who were deprived of the means of earning it, on account of their leaving Popery; and have entirely sustained several orphan converts."

A church has been built in Ennis by its exertions, and its schools shed the benefits of a good Scriptural education in fourteen counties of Ireland. This society is connected with the Established Church, and interferes with the operation of none other labouring in the vast field of Reformation. Its office is peculiar, and not exercised without very beneficial results. The genuine disinterestedness which sustains its course is expressed thus in this year's Report:—

"It can be of no pecuniary advantage to the managers of this society what amount of funds they receive, for all is done gratuitously, yet most carefully. The committee assemble monthly for considering every application, and nothing is done without careful inquiry and strict investigation, while every unnecessary expense is avoided, nothing being charged for except the printing and postage."

So remarkable an occurrence as that of five priests abandoning the Church of Rome in the year 1844 could not fail to cause the considerable interest it did in this country, as well as in England. The men who thus nobly acted were, as a matter of course, set upon by the vilest abuse and the most unrelenting persecution. They had no refuge from either, and such a prospect made the suffering they had to endure the more intensely painful. That such a state of things should not continue, it was resolved by a few individuals, who united for that purpose, to found an institution for their protection. Accordingly, "*The Priests' Protection Society*" was established in the same year. Its objects, as described in the Report, are principally as follows:—

"First, to protect priests of good character who conscientiously abandon the apostasy of Rome for the pure faith of the Gospel;

second, to afford protection and education to a class of young men originally intended for the priesthood of the Romish Church; *third*, to disseminate throughout the world, by means of the pulpit and the press, Scriptural and anti-Popish instruction; *fourth*, to reform Romish priests throughout Great Britain, Ireland, and foreign countries."

These are noble and worthy purposes, and have not been left unexercised. More than fourteen reformed priests, and about twenty-five reformed Romish students, have been protected and aided by this society since its foundation. It has issued from the press about 300,000 "Scriptural and anti-Popish publications."

The untiring exertions of the *Irish Society of London* are at the present moment doing valuable service in the Reformation cause. It works well in its own right, which seeks to give God his own, and materially aids the instrumentality of its Irish namesake.

The *Irish Island Society*, in connexion with the Established Church, which had been early in the labour, had very lately employed in the Lord's service twenty-five readers. These teachers confine their work to the islands and coasts. I am credibly informed, that 15,000 souls have, through it, had an opportunity of embracing the saving truths of the Gospel.

Another body, which, perhaps, I should have before noticed, is the *Religious Tract Society for Ireland*, whose efforts, since 1819, have circulated throughout the land 10,100 books and tracts of wholesome instruction. It has also furthered the establishment of over 1,000 depositories and lending libraries.

The Presbyterians, too, have been up and doing in the general struggle. They partook of the apathy of the Episcopalians in earlier years; but, in modern times, they were resolved to have some share in the sacred labours to which the others had directed their scattered energies. The Assembly's full missionary sphere is thus briefly represented:—

About sixteen years ago, it founded Irish schools in the county of TYRONE. A minister, located at Sixmile-town, superintends at present forty-six teachers, who

have in charge 340 scholars. Of these teachers, twenty-five had been Roman Catholics. In the county of DONEGAL it supports twenty Irish teachers, who have the care of 397 scholars. Five of the teachers have ceased to be Roman Catholics. At BIRR it has a mission, directed by Dr. Carlile. In that district it sustains three daily industrial schools, and several Scripture-readers, who visit, without much opposition, better than 600 families. KERRY, which enjoys the full benefit of the *Irish Society's* labours, receives some assistance from this body too. In CONNAUGHT, says the Report of the Presbyterian operations—

“Are twelve ministers doing missionary work, nine catechists, or Scripture-readers, forty schools, in which are forty-seven teachers, of whom five are male teachers, and the remainder female teachers. There are on the rolls above 2,000 children, and about 1,500 in daily attendance. In the female school the sewed muslin work is taught to about one-half of the girls.”

The NORTH is the chief scene of Presbyterian Reformation exertions. There it has more than sixty Irish teachers, and 700 Irish scholars. Connected with it is an excellent association, called “*The Belfast Ladies' Relief Association* for Connaught,” presided over by Dr. Edgar. It supports over forty female teachers, who conduct as many schools, on an admirable industrial model.

More than once I have adverted to the labours of the Wesleyans, made, too, at times when most others were idle. I have now to speak of the present position of that body :—

The *Primitive Wesleyan Connection* is a most active and excellent division of the Wesleyan community. It sends forth now through Ireland about fifty circuit preachers, and employs over forty agents. The efforts are confined to no locality, the entire kingdom being their missionary sphere. This body has had its labours thus summed up :—

“In the course of each year 40,000 sermons in English and Irish are preached ; 100,000 family visits are paid, and 120,000 miles travelled.”

The *Wesleyan Missionary Society* embraces as extensive a department of operation as the above. It has twenty-two missionaries, who attend to the districts comprised in eighteen stations. Of these, five are in Ulster, two in Leinster, eight in Munster, and three in Connaught. These missionaries state, that at no time was the Roman Catholic mind so teachable as now. To profit by this agreeable fact, they have established throughout the country sixty-two schools, whereto flock about 3,000 scholars. Another branch of the Wesleyan tree—the *Methodist New Connection Society*—has ten missionaries. One of these works in Leinster, all the rest in Ulster. The Methodist body has altogether in Ireland 248 ministers and missionaries, of whom 135 do duty in Ulster, sixteen in Connaught, fifty-seven in Leinster, and forty in Munster.

The *Congregationalists*, through the Irish Evangelical Society, support twelve itinerant ministers, and seven Scripture-readers, who chiefly labour in Ulster.

The *Baptists*, through their Society of London, employ sixteen agents and six Scripture-readers, who are scattered throughout the country.

Eight Scripture-readers are supported by the Trustees of the late Countess of Huntingdon. Five of them labour in Ulster, one in Leinster, and two in Connaught.

These and other collateral and subsidiary agencies, in a certain degree, although not in equal ways, contribute to the great movement now felt all over Ireland by every party; anxiously watched and rejoiced at in England; and mourned over and execrated in the Vatican.

CHAPTER XII.

(FROM THE YEAR 1846 TO 1852.)

EXTENDED EXERTIONS—THE IRISH CHURCH MISSIONS SOCIETY ESTABLISHED—THE GOSPEL IN THE WEST.

Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.—*Isaiah*, i. 9. Behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their ways and their doings; and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it. And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings; and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God.—*Ezekiel*, xiv. 22, 23.

THE grandest feature in the mighty machinery for the evangelisation of Ireland, comes next under consideration. A multitude of causes had contributed to make the advance of such an organisation as I am now about to write of, free from several difficulties, which were sometimes of peculiar power. The many matters of a religious nature which, in endless shapes, daily pressed themselves on, and became familiar to, the Irish mind—the several indirect means used to take advantage of them by those institutions already framed for Ireland's benefit—the rapid success of Gospel truth in the most gloomy and forlorn districts, by the exertions of a society designedly, and at its foundation, wisely limited in its operative undertakings—these and various other branching circumstances conspired to invite missionary efforts on a wider and more comprehensive basis than had been heretofore tried. New ideas of independence, religious and social, were becoming of general importance in this country.

The detection of incessantly repeated solemn cheats, such as banishing the potato blight, resorted to by the priests, in order to delude their people—the total absence of common generosity, which they exhibited in times of utter distress—the unscrupulous energy wherewith they clung to what they termed their dues, without regarding the destitute condition of the mayhap starving victim thus fleeced—the reckless mendacity of sanctimonious but selfish agitators, such as O'Connell and Mathews—all, all, aided to prepare Irishmen against despising, if not generally accepting, an extensive and open Reformation movement. The priests were beginning to be looked upon as men. In many cases they had degraded the name of man. Salvation was being considered as something more serious than an article of traffic. Poverty humbled the peasant's heart, and induced him to reflect if all was right, and if he had courage to accompany a doubt he found all was wrong. Every circumstance connected with the position of the country pointed to the opportunity. No time was more suited for a direct extension of Gospel operations. God, who in His wisdom had brought about so seasonable an opportunity, produced in His mercy a worthy servant to embrace it.

The Rev. A. Dallas, whose name is now worthily, and for ever, associated with Ireland's history, visited our country in 1839, as the advocate of the Gospel's spread amongst the Jews. His acquaintance with the ministers of the Irish Church only then properly began. Gradually his efforts to direct their particular attention to the bursting of the spiritual bondage which chained the Irish Romanists became appreciated. By special desire he addressed the assembled clergy on the subject in the April of 1841. He was warmly and eloquently seconded by that wise, untiring Christian champion, the Rev. R. J. M'Ghee. The clergy heard and liked what was said, but felt reluctant to act upon it. Under the impression that the stronghold of Satan, *if reducible in Ireland*, could be crushed by the existing operations, they declined to go further! They did not conceive that the crisis was arrived when a machinery could be fully exercised, profess-

edly carrying the Gospel, as such, into the heart of Romanism as to where it was not. This to the clergy then appeared far too rash and bold an effort. To Mr. Dallas God revealed it in a different and a truer light. He felt that the time was coming when the indirect method, heretofore of necessity employed, may now in most cases be fairly dispensed with, and that an open and avowed mode, without risk and with success, should be adopted. He was not dismayed at the cold reception of his advice, and often in the three subsequent years re-visited the country, gathering each time fresh courage, and acquiring improved notions of carrying out some such plan for Ireland's good.

Mr. Dallas, as a soldier fighting for the cause of his country, had acquired on the Continent most material, very general, and unusual experience. Now that he had marshalled himself exclusively under the banner of his God, that experience was brought profitably to bear in the service of his good and glorious commander—Christ. As a practised officer, his aptitude for organisation was decided, and of incalculable utility in the purposed attack upon the powers and territory of darkness. Add to this the spiritual energies of the man—his devotion to God—his continual prayerfulness, his genuine, unostentatious piety, and the instrument bears the stamp of God's choosing. The bounteous blessings which have crowned his labours have since proved this.

Four years after he had revealed his unmatured ideas to the clergy in the Rotundo, he was one morning mentally calculating what plans could be, with the least expense, instantly carried out. To execute any he had thought expedient, a sufficiency of pecuniary means was needed. While meditating upon this decided difficulty, a letter was delivered to him from the late E. Durant, Esq., of High Canons. He must have read in that letter at that moment, with peculiar feelings, the very question he was just seeking to solve. It asked him if he were ready to fulfil his long promise to do something for Ireland; and if so, that the writer was ready to assist him. To this remarkably providential communication, Mr.

Dallas hastened to reply in person. He told to Mr. Durant the primary steps which were deemed necessary to take in order to help in undeceiving the Romanists. He proposed first that trustworthy men should ascertain the names and addresses of persons to whom doubt-creating and doubt-satisfying tracts should be sent through the post. That benevolent gentleman approved of these plans, and, having advanced £300, assisted in the necessary arrangements to carry them out.

One of the earliest Post-office despatches brought to a large number of Roman Catholics in Ireland a graphic and simple little tract, called, "A Voice from Heaven to Ireland," &c. Its source was a perfect mystery to its recipients, who read it with deep interest in English and Irish, it being printed in both languages. During three days of the January of 1846, the Post-office conveyed 25,000 copies of this tract to several parts of Ireland. It appeared as it proved to be, "A Voice from Heaven."

The next tract which was so circulated was entitled, "Irishmen's Rights," and written in an agreeable dialogue style, showing that Irishmen have an indisputable right to read God's Word. The priests, who had themselves in the same way received addresses, began to watch those who were suspected of getting the tracts. But the people considering they but exercised a right, concealed the uninvited but welcome little visitor. Upon the failure of the potato disease, a most appropriate tract, named "The Food of Man," was issued, and gave great satisfaction to the people who got them, but terrible annoyance to the priests, who were also favoured with new and important "addresses."

The eight trustworthy messengers by whose care the names of the persons thus secretly enlightened had been furnished, watched eagerly the progress of the plan, and recorded its success. These messengers had been enabled during their travels to observe and point out places the most likely to receive ministerial instruction, and which were afterwards made mission-stations. They themselves had not neglected to converse freely with all whom they met, and thus gained an intimacy with the state of

feeling respecting religion, and the most acceptable manner of dealing with it. Upon the reports so judiciously obtained, and having measured the necessary organisation by the excitement the tracts, &c., produced, Mr. Dallas prepared afterwards to act.

The famine of 1846 crushed the little prospects our poor country had. Mr. Dallas instantly formed a committee, called "*The Special Fund for the Spiritual Exigencies of Ireland.*" Through it he aided the several operating societies, but chiefly the *Irish Society*, with such means as diminished the great outward pressure. For two years the committee of this fund continued supporting the working agencies, especially in the West.

Mr. Dallas having failed to persuade the *Irish Society* to extend the basis of its rules, and undertake such missionary work as I have already mentioned, as being thought by him now necessary, he, after much deliberation, altered the name and plans of "*The Special Fund.*" This memorable change was perfected on the 25th of May, 1849, when a new and important association was formed from it, entitled, THE SOCIETY FOR IRISH CHURCH MISSIONS TO THE ROMAN CATHOLICS. The grand aims and rules of the society so designated, as drawn up in the Report, are these:—

"The great object of the society is to promote Church Missions to the Roman Catholics of Ireland through the Established Church in Ireland; the chief attention being directed to the English-speaking population, except in the missions in Galway, and except in such districts as may not be occupied by the Irish Society; and this object is carried on with cordial good-will to the Irish Society, labouring in their important sphere among the Irish-speaking population.

"In pursuing this object, the committee adopt the following regulations:—

"I. At the request of incumbents, they will aid in supporting assistant ministers, in parishes containing a large Roman Catholic population. The nomination and appointment of these ministers to be subject to rule VII., being similar to that of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, with the understanding, that ministration to the Roman Catholics shall be their distinct and peculiar object.

"II. Assistant ministers may also be appointed, under the direction of the bishop, for the Roman Catholics of a whole diocese.

"III. In parishes where the incumbent may be favourable to such efforts, the temporary services of able and experienced clergymen may be engaged, in visiting districts, in giving lectures, and in preaching to the Roman Catholics.

"IV. Courses of lectures, by competent lecturers, on the great subjects in controversy between the Churches of England and Rome, will be encouraged and upheld in the principal towns in Ireland.

"V. The committee to be at liberty, according to its resources, to adopt any measures that may tend to the furtherance of the conversion of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland, by means consistent with the principles of the United Church of England and Ireland; and to maintain friendly communication with all Church of England societies seeking the spiritual welfare of Ireland.

"VI. The committee will gladly be the medium of sending any aid which contributors may wish to appropriate to the religious societies they have already assisted; and a friendly intercourse shall be maintained with other Protestants engaged in the same benevolent design of communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

"VII. No grant from the society's funds for the benefit of any parish or district is to be made, unless the incumbent himself shall apply, or sanction the application for aid, and shall furnish to the committee sufficient proof of the exigency of the case. The nomination of an assistant shall always be left with the clergyman to whom aid is given, the committee claiming only full satisfaction as to the qualifications of his nominee; who, when approved, will be under engagement only to the clergyman by whom he is employed, and be solely responsible to him. Grants from the society towards the support of an assistant are made to the clergyman to whom aid is given, and are voted for one year."

When the society, thus duly formed, had arranged every incipient plan for the execution of its glorious purposes, a deputation waited on the clergymen assembled in Dublin, who, after a candid and careful discussion, thoroughly agreed with the objects and rules of the infant society. The deputation was thanked, and important resolutions, signed by more than two hundred clergymen, were passed at a meeting over which Dr. Singer presided, fully concurring in the views of the deputation, and cordially tendering co-operation in the godly labour. In Cork a similar manifestation took place.

The operations of the society were not delayed a day

beyond the completion of the requisite preparations. All things being ready, the Gospel invitation was given first at

CASTLEKERKE, which is about twenty-four miles distant from Galway. It is situated in a beautiful and most picturesque valley, forming a delightful island in an arm of Lough Corrib. An old castle, a small church, the parsonage, and a gentleman's residence, catch the eye almost together and at once. On every side the grandeur and variety of mountain scenery afford attractions of no ordinary kind to the tourist. This locality is not only interesting in the magnificence of its natural position, but also in the beautiful work, more delightful than any other to nature's God, which is being carried on within it.

A short time before the year 1845, the people of this interesting district were all Romanists, sunk in ignorance, and wallowing in all the vices and degrading superstitions of the apostasy. They assembled at the holy well, near the present parsonage, as at a fair, often tearing the hair from their heads and knotting it, as a token of their visits, on the neighbouring bush-branches, which were literally covered with bits of red rags, to remind the patron saint of cures still unperformed. They assembled on Sunday mornings to play at cards for whiskey, and after the quickly-mumbled mass they hurried away to the card-tables again, seldom separating without a fight. They could not tell which of the Divine Persons became man, but they almost worshipped the priests, and were fleeced unmercifully by them. Such was the state of religion and morals in this place, when a good and warm-hearted Christian lady, Mrs. Blake, came to reside here, with her husband, some eight years ago. She soon assembled a few children in her own cottage, and invited the good and faithful rector of the parish, the Rev. E. L. Moore, to come and preach to a few people who expressed a willingness to receive religious instruction. With this invitation the rector was but too happy to comply, and came accordingly a distance of more than twelve Irish miles, through a mountain road (there is a good road now), to preach every fortnight to a people who even then displayed a thirst for Scriptural knowledge. While Mr. Moore and Mrs. Blake were

thus silently pursuing their "work of faith and labour of love," God, in his mercy, was pleased to send the Rev. Mr. Dallas here, and to put it into his heart to help on the work with all the energy and zeal which so pre-eminently distinguish that faithful servant of Christ. He was not long in collecting funds to enlarge the school-house, to build a school-boat, and to commence a system of reproductive employment, under the care of the kind and good Mrs. Blake. He also came over from time to time, at great inconvenience, to preach to the people, to cheer on the work, and to test its reality.

When Mr. Dallas found that the labour went on increasing, and promised to be, under the Divine blessing, abiding, he wrote to the Bishop of Tuam, early in the year 1848, acquainting his lordship with the willingness of the people to join the communion of the Church of England, and imploring him to give them a settled and regular ministry, by sending an ordained Irish-speaking missionary to labour amongst them, and preach the Gospel to them in their own tongue. This was the great crisis of the missionary work of West Galway; for had his lordship declined to accede to Mr. Dallas's proposal, the work, without a resident Irish-speaking minister, would, humanly speaking, have gone on but slowly, while Mr. Dallas, discouraged and damped in his efforts, might not have opened up fresh ground, fearing a similar result. But the Father of Mercy willed it otherwise, having, as I am convinced, a people amongst these wild mountains. The excellent and reflecting bishop, who is well aware that Romanism has degraded, pauperised, and made a byword of our poor country, in spite of all its natural capabilities, and that the pure and Scriptural faith of our reformed Church, by instilling new feelings and new principles into the people's minds, will alone exalt it—having taken some time to consider the matter, cheerfully consented to do all that the rector and Mr. Dallas desired. Accordingly, on the 21st of May, that same year, Mr. John O'Callaghan, himself a convert, was ordained to go forth with faithful zeal and preach the Word. Castlekerke school-house was borrowed for divine worship, but was soon found to be much

too small for the hundreds who flocked to hear the Word of Truth.

The movement in this district, in spite of all the oppositions and hindrances with which Satan is always sure to endeavour to mar the cause of Gospel truth, wherever carried on, has been since gradually and steadily progressing; so that, where a few years ago there was not perhaps a single Protestant, there is at present, without the slightest exaggeration, a larger congregation assembled on every Lord's day, to hear the joyful sound of the Gospel of peace, than can be found at the cheerless and uninstructional mass in any country chapel in the west of Galway. As the tree is known by its fruit, mark the blessed result of this happy change—not one of the hundreds of converts in this district has been convicted of any crime for the last four years. While at every petty sessions there are trials for fighting and stealing, &c., on the part of the Romanists, there has not occurred one solitary case of any dispute at a law court amongst the converts. While the blind, deluded people who still cling to the priests, spend the Lord's day at the card-table, the wretched whiskey-cabin, or the dance-house, the converts remain at home with their families, or visit the houses of the readers, remembering to keep holy the Sabbath day.

These facts, which may be applied to twenty districts, clearly prove the extent and value of the good already done, and which—as proving what Ireland may become if once rescued from the degrading and mischievous influence of the Italian priests—should stimulate her real friends to exert themselves more and more in working out her regeneration by their means, their energies, and their prayers.

Mr. O'Callaghan, whose labours were crowned with such signal success in Castlekerke, was promoted, by the good and faithful Lord Bishop of Tuam, to the rectory of Oughterard, on the 16th of November, 1851. There a nearly new and extensive field was open to him. On his departure from amongst a people to whom he had announced many gladdening truths, he was feelingly addressed by them, and presented with a handsome Polyglot copy of

that sacred Book, from which he hourly taught them to believe on Jesus crucified, and on Him alone.

To the Castlekerke Mission now strictly belong two other stations—*Curnamona and Kilmilkin*. In the whole district are:—One missionary, eight Scripture-readers, two schoolmasters and schoolmistresses. Almost the entire population of this district is become Protestant. The schools are carried on with great talent and success. The attendance is large, and the pupils show much intelligence. The growth of the congregation here has called for an enlargement of the new church.

On Wednesday, September 17, 1851, a deeply interesting official visit was paid to this mission by the Lord Bishop of Tuam. Having embarked at Oughterard, and proceeded up the lake to Castlekerke, he arrived at the missionary parsonage at noon, where he was met by the rector of the parish of Cong, the Rev. E. L. Moore, and the missionary, the Rev. John O'Callaghan. A confirmation then took place in the school-house, which was densely crowded by converts and others, while considerable numbers remained outside, unable to find room. Prayers were read by the rector, and some part was read in Irish by the missionary. After a discourse from the bishop, 96 persons were confirmed; 34 belonging to Castlekerke, 15 to Kilmilkin, 24 to Curramona, and 23 to South Corrib. Three of these persons were original Protestants, and 93 were converts from Romanism. The number of males was 53, and of females, 43. The ages were as follow:—16 were of the age of fourteen and under; 50 from that to twenty; 13 from that to thirty; 7 from that to forty; 5 from that to fifty; 4 from that to sixty; and 1 above sixty.

Besides these persons, a number of children, whose parents were converts, were brought by the missionary to the bishop for confirmation, all of whom had proved themselves to possess so satisfactory a knowledge of the Christian religion, and could reply so intelligibly to all the questions of the catechism, that the missionary did not feel himself at liberty to refuse them tickets of approval. But their ages were only eleven, twelve, and thirteen years, and, through famine and other circum-

stances, their appearance was much more juvenile than their actual age. After consultation with the rector, the bishop determined that their confirmation should be deferred to a future occasion. The number of persons thus deferred was forty-three.

After the confirmation, the children of the school were examined by a number of clergymen who accompanied the bishop, and their answers manifested a very considerable advancement in Scriptural knowledge.

THE CLIFDEN DISTRICT was the next important missionary opening of this Society. Clifden, a little town, and the capital of the western Irish highlands, is distant from Dublin 178 miles, and from Galway forty-seven. By the enterprise of John D'Arcy, Esq., who was formerly proprietor of the property, this recently flourishing village was entirely erected. Its harbour scenery is beautiful, and its whole position is really attractive.

The following account of the commencement and progress of missionary operations in Clifden, I copy from Mr. Marrable's admirable sketch of the Society for *Irish Church Missions*, page 27 :—

“On the 1st of October, 1847, Mr. Dallas promised Mr. D'Arcy, that missionary agents should immediately be sent to commence operations in Clifden, who began their labours the first week in January, 1848, under his superintendence. Two hundred and fifty children soon assembled in the Clifden schools; and the balance of a fund being at Mr. D'Arcy's disposal, similar schools were immediately opened in Ballyconree, Fakeragh, Errislanon, and Sellerna, with such masters as could be obtained at the moment.

“An Irish teacher heard one of the mission agents lecture on the passage, ‘Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given unto men whereby we must be saved.’—(Acts, iv. 12.) Seeing that it agreed with the Apostle's doctrine, and that the priest was following in the steps of the chief priests of old, he read this verse unceasingly to his friends, which struck at the very root of Romanism. As the people in great numbers ‘gave heed unto the word,’ the agents were considerably multiplied, and, in the following October, Mr. Dallas preached to a congregation of 500, collected at the old school-house at Sellerna. Memorials were presented to him, praying for schools to be established in Errismore, Claggan, and Barratrough. Schoolmasters were soon appointed, and other schools opened in the adjoining districts.

"In February, 1849, the Bishop of Tuam ordained two missionary clergymen, one for Sellerna, the other for Errislanon and Ballyconree. Mr. Dallas repeated his visits to these quarters; in one day he preached to six congregations, some of them exceeding in number 500. New school-houses were built to accommodate the influx of attendants, and the Lord manifestly prospered the work.

"The Rev. Roderick Ryder, one of the missionaries, thus wrote from Clifden :—

" . . . I beg to remark that, from my own experience as a priest, formerly of the Romish Church, the extent of the Lord's work cannot be judged of by the members who openly renounce Popery. There is another criterion, and a very good one, to be found in the numbers who absent themselves from the confessional and the mass-house; and if we consider this, also, we will then, indeed, have much reason to admit and confess the hand of the Lord; for the Romanist is bound, under pain of mortal sin, to confess his sins at least twice a-year, and to attend at mass each Sunday and holiday, if he can do so.

"At the last station of confessions published in the town of Clifden, there were but three persons at Ballyconree, twelve at Streamstown, and at the other stations in the same proportion, and their chapels they acknowledged to be empty; and in no one instance were they able to prevail on one of the parents to take their children from the schools. The two thousand children now attending the schools are so many little missionaries, reading the Word of God for their parents and relatives.'

"The efforts of Mr. D'Arcy, as lay-superintendent of these missions, have been greatly blessed. This worthy servant of the Lord has lately been ordained by the Bishop of Tuam, and on the 21st of July, 1851, was presented by his lordship with the living of Clifden; a suitable acknowledgment of his faithful and disinterested zeal."

The subjoined laconic passage, from a letter written by Mr. D'Arcy, at Clifden, in the April of 1851, characteristically expresses the advance then making :—

"Thank God, the work goes on here speedily, fast increasing through every part of the district; the congregations immense—the schools full. Over 2,600 scholars passed in the inspection of April; may there be many of them to meet the Lord at his coming!"

Even so late as 1850, the fiercest hatred was manifested to the work by those in the locality who were yet

attached to Rome. In this very Clifden Mr. Dallas was once burned in effigy, and that "ceremony" accompanied with yellings and execrations, that would deter less courageous spirits from persevering in labours so beset with dispiriting dangers. Enmity was not displayed merely in that fashion. The local missionary one time was beaten almost to death; and the children—about five hundred—who came to the schools were generally cruelly maltreated. But, by the power of God, the animosity then so furiously vented has since completely vanished. Respect, which shows itself in enthusiastic greetings, now welcomes those who were then so heartily and roughly despised. And as though to mark with peculiar emphasis this altered feeling, the "prelate" and priests, once so largely fêted and humbly worshipped in Clifden, are now treated with a cold disdain. In the June of last year, this contrast was made evident. The Protestant bishop, Mr. Dallas and his party were respectfully and warmly received in Clifden; and "John of Tuam," marching in about the same time, with all the pomp and circumstance of Rome, was greeted only by the squeaks of a few ragged children! I must add to that feeble expression of joy, the illumination of two panes of glass in the hotel windows! This was a significant change.

In the Clifden Mission are four other stations—*Fakeragh*, *Moyrus*, *Roundstone*, and *Ballynahinch*. In Clifden are two ordained missionaries, and in Moyrus, one—being three in the district. It has one lay agent, and eight readers, four schoolmasters, and five mistresses—of the latter, three are in Clifden village.

On Saturday, Sept. 20, 1851, a confirmation took place at Clifden Church, which being too small to contain the great number of people who assembled, many were forced to remain in the churchyard. A discourse was delivered by the bishop, and the confirmation then followed, at which 200 persons were confirmed. Twelve of these were original Protestants; 188 were converts from Romanism. The catechumens came from six different localities. From Clifden itself there were 66; from Barratrough, 55; from Errislannan, 11; from Ballinaboo, 11; from Roundstone, 21; and from Moyrus, 36;

making in all, 200. 108 of these were males, and 92 females; their ages were as follows:—94 of 14 years and under; 75 above 14, and under 20; 15 under 30; 13 under 40; 2 under 50; and 1 under 60.

On the day after this scene, which exemplifies the greatness of the work, three of the missionary deacons were in a position to require priests' orders; the bishop, therefore, appointed it for a public ordination in the town of Clifden. Two of these missionaries are converted Roman Catholics, and now labour successfully to enlighten their countrymen. From the small size of the church the necessary arrangements were made with great difficulty. The seat in front of the communion rails was occupied by the three deacons. A large number of clergy, in gowns or surplices, were placed immediately behind them; and the remainder of the church being given up to the general congregation, every spot, whether of sitting or standing room, was fully occupied. Upwards of two hundred persons remained outside the church during the whole of the service, which lasted three hours and a-half. A large proportion of these persons were Romanists. The utmost decorum was observed, and a spirit of devotional attention seemed to pervade the congregation. This was especially remarkable when, in the ordination service, after the pause for silent prayer on behalf of the candidates for the priesthood, the *Veni Creator* was sung. A large number of the congregation joined with great solemnity. Prayers being read by the rector, the Rev. H. D'Arcy, the sermon was preached by the Rev. A. Dallas, from the text, Acts, xvii. 1-5; in which, after dwelling upon the subject of the missionaries' preaching, he drew a comparison between the rapid growth of the Church in Thessalonica, and the almost equally rapid growth of the Reformation in Conemara; especially pointing out the similarity of circumstances, alluding to events with which the people of Clifden were well acquainted. In the July of the present year, fifty other converts were confirmed in Clifden district.

CONG is a mission in the west which is now chiefly sustained by the *Irish Society*. But as it happens to be in the west, and also aided by the society of which I am

writing, I venture to describe it in connexion with the work in the west.

It is situated almost on the verge of that beautiful lake which makes the scenery of Connemara peculiarly grand. It comprises many minor missionary stations, and is under the direction of a zealous, godly man, the Rev. E. L. Moore, rector of the parish.

The encouragement which was given by the reception of truth in Castlekerke, induced the Rev. Mr. Moore to urge forward the good work with greater zeal in the immediate neighbourhood of his rectory. This he was only able to do when the *Irish Church Mission Society* relieved him from the care of Castlekerke, by sending there the Rev. Mr. O'Callaghan. In the year 1840, the movement was set on foot with no apparent encouragement from the inhabitants of Cong. Two or three persons assembled to hear the words of truth in some temporary class-room. The blessed accents of eternal life were not, however, to be uttered unrequited. Things went on with such remarkable improvement, in spite of all opposition, that in 1848 it was found necessary to erect a master's house and school-house. This telling result was followed by others, as evidently bearing the stamp of God's blessing. The school-room was, when required, converted into a lecture-room, where a large number of converts or inquirers occasionally assembled for instruction. So great became the anxiety for knowledge that it was necessary to enlarge the school, and to build a boys' school separate from the girls. This is in reference to Cong alone.

In a neighbouring village a school-room was erected, which contains now on its class-roll over sixty names. In order to explain how, in spite of every species of malice and opposition, the truths of salvation cannot be destroyed, though they may be checked, I quote the following remarks from the second Report of this school:—

“Notwithstanding bitter persecution, our school has been steadily progressing; we have, of late days, lost some few of our children through the *effects of bribery*—money having been given to bring them to a foreign country, where their change of faith would

not attract much notice. Our converts have resisted all attempts to bring them back again to Popery, or to send them to a land where there still exists a famine of the Word of God—ay, even in the chapel, some of our dear convert children have dared to argue from the Scriptures, and from them they have confuted the priest of Rome. Not one of the converts have deserted us; they are well grounded in God's truth; for, while our school affords a sound general education—reading, writing, working, geography, arithmetic, and English grammar—the Bible—the whole Bible, is made the basis of all.”

In Cong there is a regular attendance of over one hundred pupils; of these the vast majority have already renounced Romanism, and the remainder cannot be counted Romanists. The Sabbath-school is flocked to by over 160 children desirous about truth. The *Gurnacunna* school, in connexion with the Cong rectory school, has on its roll over sixty names, and another part of the parish has now a temporary school, at which there is a very large attendance. In order to describe these schools properly, it may be well to quote the words of Mrs. Col. Inglis, in her *Notes of a Tour in the South and West of Ireland*:—

“Mr. Moore examined the children, and their deep knowledge of the Scriptures was very cheering; not two years in operation, yet this school surpasses any thing of the kind I have ever seen—the beautiful order and cleanliness of the whole establishment, and the immense progress of the children in Scriptural knowledge, writing, work, &c. We believe it is through such instrumentality that we may most hopefully look for the regeneration of Ireland.”

OUGHTERARD, one of the most interesting Western missions, is now directly under the superintendence of the Rev. J. O'Callaghan, who, as elsewhere stated, has been appointed its rector. It gives a name to a mission district which includes four other stations—*Ross, Glan, Glengola, and Lyons*.

Oughterard is a pretty village, about seventeen miles from Galway. It contains a few good houses, some shops, and a small hotel. The picturesque river Feogh, which glides under limestone ledges, runs by the village church, which is a handsome building, now far too small for its daily-increasing congregation.

The Word of Life reached Oughterard soon after Castlekerke had received it. In the middle of September 1851, the Lord Bishop of Tuam visited Oughterard, in order to administer the rite of confirmation to the converts brought together for that purpose. By relating this interesting circumstance, the result of the movement will be at once conceived:—

The catechumens from five different localities were assembled, and proceeded from the mission school-house to the church, where they were arranged. The bishop delivered a discourse to the catechumens and the people, after which the rite of confirmation was administered to ninety-nine persons.

The persons confirmed were divided as follows:—From Oughterard, forty-nine; from Glan, nine; from Ross, fourteen; from Inverin, twenty; from Spiddal, six; and one person from Galway; making ninety-nine in all. Of these, ten were original Protestants, and eighty-nine converts from Romanism; fifty-two were males, and forty-seven females. The ages were thus classed:—twenty-five were fourteen years old and under; thirty-eight were above fourteen and under twenty; eighteen, between twenty and thirty; eleven, between thirty and forty; six, between forty and fifty; and one, above fifty.

The number of catechumens who came from Inverin was but a small part of those who had been examined and approved by the missionary there. His return contained the names of sixty-five persons who had been prepared to attend for confirmation at Spiddal, where the new church, which was being built, was intended to be consecrated; as, however, the building was not sufficiently advanced, the bishop held no confirmation at Spiddal, and the people from the further part of the district, being forty miles from Oughterard, could not come so far; twenty-eight of them, however, determined to make the journey, and set out at midnight for the purpose. Eight of them found it impossible to get over the mountain which lies between Inverin and Oughterard; therefore only twenty-nine received confirmation from that mission.

Connected with this district, the *Irish Church Mission Society* has now employed two ordained missionaries—one located in Oughterard, and the other in Glan. It has, besides, labouring in the same field, sixteen Scripture-readers—seven of whom are at Oughterard, seven in Glan, and one at each of the other stations. There are in the district four schools—one at each station, except Glengola. These schools are all well attended by male and female children.

The number of converts is very large, as may be inferred from the confirmation list already given. I have no means of stating with accuracy what the exact number is in any district; deaths, emigrations, and other circumstances are sure to keep continually altering it. One thing I can vouch for—the sincerity of the converts, and the general stability of the work. Very lately a severe test was employed there to try both, but they were found full proof:—A gang of those meek men, seemingly melting in piety, who are mustered under the clerical banner of Vincent de Paul, paid Oughterard a “crusading visit.” They came to exorcise the rank heresy which those who invited them said filled the very air of the district. They came to preach down Jesus by preaching up Mary, as well as to vend all the little holy toys which they brought with them—to be got for a mere trifle by those who had no more than a mere trifle to offer. Before these smooth little gentlemen left Dublin to accomplish their great purpose, it was freely boasted that against their return there would not be left in the West one “Jumper”—this is a name given to converts, perhaps because they have jumped right over Rome’s rubbish. But although they spent a few weeks in the most unremitting exertions to that end, they were forced to return without having induced ONE Jumper—much less all but one—to return to that which his convictions pronounced error; while it is beyond dispute that several who before doubted, became, after the missionaries’ visit, decided Protestants. They would not satisfy inquiry but by telling inquirers not to doubt at all, as it was an awful crime. This system of stifling reason had lost its effect,

and the *De-Paulites*, with the other Romish orders, have now discovered with sorrow that fact.

Oughterard has not been exempt from priestly persecution. In all its intensity it has been there dealt out to the poor converts. As I write, I am made aware of the Romish priest forcing his way to the bedside of a dying convert, registered as a Protestant, in the poor-house hospital. The Protestant chaplain, who, having been sent for, was attending her, when the priest so interrupted him, that he was actually obliged to cast him roughly from the woman's bed. This step, made necessary by the repulsive rudeness of the priest, invited a frightful attack from his excited followers upon the chaplain, who was thus compelled to protect himself in the exercise of his office. So high did the priest's choler rise, that on the following day, by an indirect instigation, the windows of the Protestant schools, &c., were completely demolished. That is but a trifle. In the July of this year sixty-three converts, belonging to this district, were confirmed.

One of the stations attached to the above district, which was amongst the earliest to yield fruit to Christ, requires more than a passing notice:—

GLAN, the Berea of the west, lies along the southern shore of the romantic Lough Corrib, and extends very nearly from Castlekerke, on the opposite side, to the nice town of Oughterard. The Rev. A. Dallas, having heard, during one of his visits to Castlekerke, that the inhabitants of Glan—favourably impressed towards the English people in general, from having witnessed their great liberality towards the poor starving Irish in their dark hour of need, and towards Mr. Dallas in particular, from all they had heard of his kindness to the people of Castlekerke—were anxious that he should visit and preach to them, he lost no time in taking advantage of the opportunity thus providentially afforded.

A respectable young farmer, who has since departed in the faith of Christ, collected several persons in his house, to whom Mr. Dallas preached the Gospel so clearly and forcibly, that from that hour the Glanvers determined to search the Scriptures for themselves, and

to admit no doctrine which could not be fairly proved by the Word of God.

The Rev. Mr. O'Callaghan, who was appointed to the work at Castlekerke, took up a temporary residence in Oughterard, and commenced a course of lectures, &c., at Glan, once a-week, which were always numerously attended, in spite of the fierce denunciations of the Romish priests. After this people had been for some time attending Mr. O'Callaghan's meetings, they came to the unanimous determination of going together in a body, on the following Sabbath, to attend Divine worship at Castlekerke. They met at the appointed time and place, and bidding an eternal adieu to that satanic mockery of the "offering of Christ once made," the popish mass, proceeded onwards, with that courage which intellectual conviction alone can inspire. Almost all who composed that chosen band have since, from their intelligence and superior knowledge of the Bible, been employed as Scripture-readers, and are now faithfully at work, not only in all the Galway missions, but in other parts of Ireland.

An awful circumstance, which happened in Oughterard about three years ago, caused an immense sensation at the time, and has contributed, in no small measure, to help on the movement. The priest, with whom Mr. O'Callaghan had held discussions, having been shortly after removed, another most violent and cursing man was sent by the "cursing bishop," as he is called, to supply his place, and to wear out the poor converts by persecution. On each succeeding Sabbath this poor man poured forth the most dreadful curses against the "Jumpers," or any one who would hold the least intercourse with them. However, the unprovoked curse did not take effect, but the movement, on the contrary, went on prospering more than ever. The priest grew desperate, and on the last Sunday that he was allowed to address them, actually terrified his hearers by saying—"I will not rest until God shows some visible sign of his marked displeasure against them (the converts) or me." On the following Thursday, that man, then in the prime of life, and the picture of rude health, was struck down

by an attack of paralysis, and has never since been able to pronounce a blessing or to imprecate a curse. The movement went on progressing so rapidly at Glan, that it became necessary to place a missionary there, and accordingly the Rev. P. Moinah was sent forth, in the early part of 1849, to labour in the interesting field. The work continued to prosper still more under his superintendence, and fresh ground was broken in upon, and more is still opening.

The details I have given of the movement in some of the most prominent western missionary stations, I believe fairly represent the manner in which truth progresses through the dark districts of our country. They also convey, I should hope, not an inaccurate idea of the blessings wherewith God has guarded the operations of the *Irish Church Missions Society*. Committing these statements to the reader as a fair specimen of the work and manner of its execution, I shall now, before leaving the west, very briefly narrate that society's present position in other localities more recently taken up there. For that purpose I may begin with—

BALLYCONREE, a mission station within the parish of Clifden. During the visitation tour made last year by the Bishop of Tuam, he found in this district a large congregation of converts assembled at the new school-room, which had been completed for the occasion.

The confirmation of 215 converts from Romanism then took place. The catechumens were all belonging to the district, 37 being the elder children of the Connemara Orphans' Nursery, and 78 being the converts of Ballyconree; 57 were males and 58 females. Their ages were 66 of 14 years and under, 26 from 14 to 20, 6 under 30, 11 under 40, and 6 under 50 years of age.

After the confirmation, the bishop, as patron of the CONNEMARA ORPHANS' NURSERY, made a visitation of that institution. The children, 78 in number, were presented to the bishop, who went through the details of the establishment; and having seen the arrangement of the house, the work of the children, their

gardening, &c., expressed his approbation in warm terms. His lordship spoke to the children, who were then addressed by the honorary secretary, and the bishop left them, having given them his blessing.

On the morning of the visitation it had been suggested, that as many clergymen and gentlemen from England were present, it might be a good opportunity to explain to the Roman Catholics of the town of Clifden the misrepresentations so commonly made to them, concerning the feelings of the English people with respect to Romanism. The schoolmaster was sent round the town to knock at each door, and inform the inhabitants that a meeting for that purpose would be held in the school-room. It was scarcely expected that from so short a notice, and under such circumstances, any considerable number of persons would be likely to attend. At seven o'clock in the evening, the bishop, accompanied by the clergy and the party of friends who happened to be in Connemara, proceeded to the school-room, which was already crowded (at least 450 persons were present); and a very large proportion were respectable Roman Catholics. At the desire of the bishop, the rector of the parish took the chair, and opened the meeting with a hymn and prayer, in which the Roman Catholics did not scruple to join. The meeting was then addressed by the Rev. Alfred Hill, vicar of Morebath, in Devonshire, who stated the fact, which came within his own knowledge, demonstrating the general feeling which exists in England, repugnant to the doctrines of Romanism. The Rev. E. Ellis, Corresponding Secretary for the Society of Irish Church Missions, now employed in Dublin, and previously at Doon, explained to the meeting the facts connected with the remarkable progress of the Reformation amongst the Roman Catholics in both those places.

A short address was added by the Rev. A. Dallas, the doxology was sung, and the bishop closed the meeting with the blessing.

In this mission are two other stations—*Barratrough* and *Turbot Island*. An ordained missionary, four Scrip-

ture-readers, three schoolmasters, and two mistresses, constitute its agency.

Turbot Island, belonging to this district, is one of the most destitute and neglected spots in the whole of Connemara. There is, nevertheless, in it a very good school; the children attending it from the two islands of Turbot and Innisturk are more than 60 in number. Their progress shows considerable intelligence. In the district are three other schools doing well.

BALLINAKILL is another comparatively recent mission establishment. The scenery of this locality is romantically beautiful.

To this district are now attached four other stations—*Renvyle, Cleggan, Salruck, and Linane*. In his confirmation tour last year, the Bishop of Tuam visited one of these stations—Salruck—in order to confirm converts. A large congregation was assembled, the greater part of which were converts and Roman Catholics. Thirty persons were confirmed; 2 being original Protestants and 28 converts from Romanism.

Of the persons confirmed here, 17 were males and 13 females. Their ages were, 7 of 14 years and under, 9 from that to 20, 6 from that to 30, 4 from that to 40, 3 from that to 50, and 1 above 50 years.

The labour here is carried out by three missionaries, being located respectively in Ballinakill, Renvyle, and Salruck. They are aided by four readers, four schoolmasters, and one mistress. The several mission stations in this beautifully wild district are said by regular tourists to exhibit grateful symptoms of daily improvement in civilisation.

ERRISMORE gives a name to five very interesting stations—*Derrigimla, Aillebrack, Duholla, Ballenaboy, and Errislanon*. In the first of these stations resides an ordained missionary, who labours through the whole district, with three readers. All the stations have schools and competent teachers.

In the afternoon of the day (September 20th, 1851) which witnessed the interesting scene of an ordination in Clifden, by the Bishop of Tuam, his lordship proceeded to Derrygimla, in the promontory of Errismore.

The large school-house, which had been some time building, was temporarily arranged for the occasion. A full congregation of converts and Roman Catholics occupied one part of the room, and 119 catechumens (76 from Derrygimla, 20 from Aillebrack, and 23 from Duholla) were brought before the bishop.

After a discourse, which the bishop addressed to the people and the catechumens, the confirmation took place. Two of those confirmed were original Protestants, and 117 were converts from Romanism; the number of males was 59, and the number of females, 60. The ages were as follow:—of 14 years and under there were 22; from that to 20 years, 48; under 30 there were 20; under 40 there were 15; under 50 there were 12; under 60 there were 2. Besides these, 8 persons came to the missionary on the previous day for confirmation, but as he had given notice that he would receive none without a month's preparation, he deferred them to another occasion. In this district fifty-one converts were confirmed in the present year.

SELLERNA is not the most recent or least promising settlement in the west. This may be gathered from the progress it manifested, by presenting the Lord Bishop of Tuam last year with a list of 167 persons for confirmation, although only 84 received that rite. Two of these were originally Protestants, and 82 were converts; 35 were males, and 49 were females. Of those whose ages were 14 years and under there were 20; there were 51 between 14 and 20; there were 8 under 30; 4 under 40; and 1 above 50 years.

The list of admitted catechumens given to the bishop by the missionary at Sellerna contained the names of 167 persons. Upon inquiry as to the reason why only 84 had actually received confirmation, it was found that the strongest means had been resorted to by some landlords and their agents to induce the parents of many of the young persons, and in some cases by the parents themselves, to prevent those over whom they had influence from being confirmed. No fewer than 83 persons had been thus impeded, after having been examined and ap-

proved by the missionary. The same reason accounts for similar discrepancies which exist between the lists of other missionaries and the number actually confirmed. These show a difference of 30 in other places, besides the 83 at Sellerna, where the strongest opposition has long been exercised.

To Sallerna belong the stations *Claddaghduff* and *Omey*. There is only one ordained missionary in the district, who is assisted by five readers and four schoolmasters. There are also three schoolmasters and a school in each station, well attended. The July of the present year witnessed there the confirmation of forty-six converts.

SPIDDAL mission is nine miles west of Galway. The village of that name was famous for its salmon-trout. Now it is renowned for its acceptance of God's life-giving faith. A missionary, three readers, and a schoolmaster, carry on there "the fishing for men." God has blessed their labour, one hundred and seventeen converts having been there confirmed this July.

INVERIN is another well-favoured district, promising a rich harvest to the Lord. It includes *Casla* and *Lettermore*. In the work going on in these places, one missionary, four readers, and three school teachers, are engaged.

LOUGH MASK—after which the joint stations of *Tourmakeady* and *Partree* are named—extends ten miles from north to south, and is of an average breadth of four miles. The steep mountains of Partree beautifully rise from its western shore better than 2,200 feet. It is a district of natural sublimity, and of considerable historical notoriety. God's Word now echoes freely amidst its wilds and ruins. It has lately received an ordained missionary, having been previously worked by four readers and two schoolmasters.

The GALWAY mission has only been taken up within the last year. This maritime town is about 126 miles distant from Dublin, with which it is now directly connected by railway. Of its population, which by the last census was stated to be 24,697, about 1000 are mem-

bers of the Established Church ; 90 are Protestant dissenters, and all the rest are Roman Catholics. There are in the town one Protestant church, one Presbyterian, and one Methodist meeting-house ; while there are three Romish chapels, three monasteries, and five nunneries ! The bay of Galway is a very large and beautiful sheet of water, protected from the swells of the Atlantic by the natural breakwater of the Arran Isles. The *Irish Church Mission Society* has divided the district into five stations, thus :—*Galway, Headford, Rooveagh, Tuam, and Lavally*. In the first station is located the clerical missionary, with seven readers ; and at Tuam, a lay agent and three readers. In Headford, where another reader resides, twenty-three converts were confirmed in July last.

Perhaps one of the boldest strides made by this Society was the fearless introduction of the Gospel into the very den of the Lion of Rome in this county—into Tuam, which belongs to the Galway district, and is his residence. Frantic, beyond description, at so noble and open an effort to rend the veil which conceals Rome's reality, "John of Tuam" lost not a moment in creating the deadliest enmity in the minds of his people against the detested but forbearing proselytisers. Continual and dreadful persecution was the result. During the hottest part of some of the riots which he had thus fomented, "John of the Tribe of Judas" was observed once looking down with admiring complacency from his drawing-room window upon his too bidable flock, pelting and hooting clergymen and readers. A correspondent of the *Warder* thus writes, in reference to those outrageous proceedings, after a change in the Government had frightened the actors into an abandonment of their fiercest weapons :—

"A stranger, unaccustomed to such scenes as I daily witness, could scarcely conceive anything more awful than a walk with a missionary through one of the streets of Tuam. The shouting is not so loud as usual ; but the downcast look and muttered execration will indicate what is passing within. From every door, from every hovel, men, boys, and women, but especially the lat-

ter, pour a continued fire of curses, oaths, and insults of the most personal nature and shocking character, sufficient to impress the hearer with an idea that he is no longer an inhabitant of the refined portions of the earth, but situated in the locality of devils."

Notwithstanding this, a very successful lodgement has been made in Tuam by those who have the cause of heaven at heart; and several people, regardless of all the frightful persecution consequent, have "come out." Last July, the Lord Bishop confirmed here twenty-one converts in the faith of Christ. Doubtless, were the hard-hearted priests to change their relentless course, and be moderate, Tuam, ere many months, would send "the Lion" to seek another shelter, no longer needing his official presence; and his present jackals would either become meek followers of another master, or accompany him away. As it is, however, this end will only be gained gradually, and with difficulty—but, with God's blessing, it will be gained.

BURRISHOOLE is a mission lately taken possession of in Mayo. The principal station is called *Mulranny*, at which is located a missionary and reader. Operations are favourably progressing there.

BALLA is also a mission in Mayo, which has been just opened. To carry on operations in it, a missionary and lay agent, and three readers have been supplied by the society. In the first reports just issued from the district, these passages occur, and they appear to express clearly the progress and prospects of the movement in that part of the country:—

"No sooner was it known that the readers had begun the good work, than the priest at once took the alarm. On the following Sunday he denounced, in no very measured terms, the clergyman of the parish and the Jumpers, from the altar. In consequence, the mob attacked the readers, on the same day, on their way to and from church, both morning and evening. They were hooted, called Jumpers, and had stones and mud thrown at them; but that God who is always a strong tower of defence, graciously preserved them from personal injury. They were similarly treated on the two or three following days, but not with such determination on the part of the populace. The readers waited on the priest on Tuesday last, and were admitted. He demanded

their authority for preaching the Scriptures. They gave him Deut. vi. 1-8; Rev. xxii. 17. He asked them to prove the Divine authority of the Scriptures. They gave him the facts of the present dispersion of the Jewish people, and the fulfilment in the Roman Catholic Church of 1 Tim. iv. 1-4. They then asked him how he knew that he was ordained, and plied him strongly with the doctrine of Intention. He quoted in support of Transubstantiation, John vi. They replied, if that referred to the Eucharist, then Judas must have been saved—and Luther surely was—and I must be saved, continued the reader, although I was once a Roman Catholic, and am now a Jumper. The progress of the readers, as might be expected, has been considerably retarded in the district; but they are going forward as favourably as might be expected under the circumstances. They state that they are admitted into but few houses in the village, but that they are delivering the message with which they are charged to the people by the way-side, and in the country districts. I have no doubt but that in due time God will open a door of entrance for his own blessed Word. He will make the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of his wrath he will restrain."

The reader has been now presented with an account of the fourteen missions already established by this society in that portion of Ireland which is, strictly speaking, "the west." To these missions are annexed fifty-six principal stations. The agency it there employs is composed of 193 individuals, and may be thus classified:—Ordained ministers, 21; lay agents, 3; Scripture-readers, 83; schoolmasters, 55; and schoolmistresses, 31. The number of converts confirmed in the west this year is 941; last year, 712; and the year before, 401—showing a decided and steady increase.

Many other localities in "the west," besides those thus enumerated, are, while I write, being fixed upon for new missions, and fresh stations are being appended to those already occupied. Many more, I doubt not, shall have been at full work before this volume is a year old.

Some of those districts, where the baneful influence of the worst superstitions had uninterrupted prevalence, are now not only favoured with the constant visits of those who bear the Gospel message, but enjoy the privilege of having erected in the midst of them sacred edi-

fices whereto the people can resort on the "hallowed day," to give praise and pray unitedly to their blessed Lord and Saviour. Better than fourteen new churches have been erected in the most remote districts of the long-neglected west, since the commencement of this holy movement—and others are building. Those churches are now the scenes of some of the most affecting incidents in the Christian history of a people in process of Reformation. They have been, not alone the cause of counteracting the disgusting practices which are known to have defiled the sanctity of the Sabbath, but they have enabled man to assert his independence, and to love, heartily love, his God, and Him only. They have rendered the name of "card player" detested, the *shebeen*-house frequenter shunned, the Sabbath-breaker of any sort looked upon as a suspicious member of a Christian society. Truly, when a person only for a moment pictures to himself the odious contrast which the practices in this quarter, a few years ago, make with those now existing, he must feel exceeding surprise and gratification. Drunkenness has given way to sobriety, swearing to blessing, Sabbath-breaking to Sabbath-keeping, gross and debasing sports to social and enlightening recreations; the dance-house and *shebeen*-shop to the house of God and Scriptural converse meetings; irreligion to piety, superstition to Christianity. In short, demoralisation has been destroyed by its antidote—the Bible. God's Word has proved itself an inestimable blessing to the poor westerns, who must necessarily grow from poverty to comparative wealth, when the unworthy incitements to lavish time and money are gone.

But now to leave "the west," that sphere where the *Irish Church Missions'* labours are so bountifully and so profitably bestowed, I must briefly notice the extension of its efforts into other quarters of the kingdom:—

The SOUTH-EASTERN MISSION, which has now fully opened for the good work, comprises *Enniscorthy, New Ross, and Mulrankin*. At the first station are settled a missionary, two lay agents, and four schoolmasters. To each of the others two readers only have been as yet

allocated. Enniscorthy is situated near the celebrated Vinegar Hill, and is the most central town in Wexford. The river Slaney flows by its side. It is eleven miles distant from New Ross, which is built on the boundaries of Kilkenny and Wexford, and is about eighty miles from Dublin. Great opposition is shown here to the Word, but it will make its way.

KILKENNY is another most promising mission, newly entered upon. The stations which comprise the district are—*Kilkenny, Carlow, Portarlinton, and Callan*. The first station, which is the capital of the county of that name, is distant from Carlow, also the chief town in the adjacent county, about twelve miles; from Portarlinton about forty-three; and from Callan about nine. Kilkenny is united to Dublin, from which it is seventy miles distant, by railroad; and Portarlinton, which lies on the borders of the Queen's and King's counties, and is forty-four miles from Dublin, can also be reached by a similar mode of travelling. Callan is situated in a south-western direction from Kilkenny, and stands about two miles from the borders of Tipperary, and seven from Ballingarry, the scene of O'Brien's rebellion. The *Irish Church Mission Society* has appointed one missionary, one lay agent, and eight Scripture-readers, to teach the people of this part of the country better things than rebellion, of which too much had been dealt out, both to the Sovereign of Kings, and to that monarch whom He has given to rule us here. The mission has been wonderfully well received in this notoriously seditious district, which was not broken in upon by any former efforts at Reformation.

CASHEL, the famed city of the kings, and now a favourite diocese of the Pope's prelacy, is another new district entered upon by the Gospel bearers of the Lord Jesus. This is taking the Bible war right into the heart of the once dreaded Tipperary. The declining, but ancient city of Cashel is very nearly the centre point of the south riding of that extensive county, and is about half-way between Thurles and Clonmel, being distant from either about thirteen miles. A railway approaches it within

twelve miles. To this very important station a missionary, a lay agent, and two readers have been sent. They have encountered only the usual obstacles, and expect to reap a good harvest for the Lord.

LOUGH DERG, a beautiful and immense opening on the Upper Shannon, gives a name to a mission now opened in the north riding of Tipperary. Nenagh, which is six miles from the edge of the Lough, and is nearly the centre of the riding, is the principal station yet occupied. In it a missionary, a lay agent, and two readers are located. I am myself well acquainted with this district, and, from my experience of it, I expect ere long to hear of its being a very extensive and flourishing mission. It badly needed such an exertion as this society is now making in its behalf.

The SHANNON MISSION denominates the districts lying about the "Lower Shannon," having *Askeaton* as the chief station, and the only one yet to which labourers have been appointed. An arm of this magnificent river extends to the side of *Askeaton* village, right opposite the greatest opening the Shannon presents. It will be recollected that under the auspices of the present Dean of Ardagh—the venerable servant of God, Dr. Murray—a most prosperous mission was begun in this locality at the time he was its vicar, and when such exertions were lamentably scarce in the country. Most of those then gained to the true Shepherd's fold have been since called before His throne; while many others yet live, enjoying His favour in our colonies, as good, trust-worthy citizens and faithful Christians. *Askeaton*, for many reasons, indeed, was a happy selection for the missionary headquarters of this vast district. There are at present only a missionary and three readers employed there to gather up the Lord's harvest, which is very abundant.

The MEATH mission is amongst those lately opened, and has its head station at *Navan*, which is connected with the metropolis by rail. A missionary and four readers constitute its agency at present. The operations are only begun. It was when seeking the representation of this county, the other day, that a gentleman

avowedly entered the field under the protection of the Virgin Mary! It is likely that its people will, the next time, be less disposed to favour such sort of devotees.

LOUTH—to which belong two stations, *Drogheda* and *Dundalk*—is some time under the society's charge. In the first station—where already a missionary, a lay agent, and six readers, who work the district, reside—a very interesting class-meeting, nearly on the principle of that in connexion with the Dublin mission, is well and regularly conducted. Great benefit has been ascertained to have resulted from this meeting. Many conversions have occurred in *Drogheda* since the opening of the mission; and persecution on the part of the priests, of course, followed the success. Denunciations from the altar were attended to with cruel fidelity. Last year two Scripture-readers were so outrageously beaten, after one of those Sunday altar harangues, that for some time their lives were in danger. Things are now far more tranquil. The agents of the *Irish Church Mission Society* are not to be expelled by such hellish means from any district in which they find God's Word has but to be made known to gain acceptance. The priests understand that now, and use other more secret, but not less disreputable, means to impede the Gospel spread. All will not do.

The **ROSCOMMON** Mission is amongst the latest opened. I have great satisfaction in recording one significant and praiseworthy circumstance in connexion with the opening of this mission. Upon the society appointing the Rev. G. W. Dalton as missionary to that district, the bishop of the diocese in which the mission is—*Elphin*—took the opportunity as one in which to exhibit his interest for the work, and his appreciation of the society engaged in it. This he did, in the handsomest manner, by bestowing on the selected missionary of the society a vicarage within his district. That mission will have by this means desirable advantages it could not otherwise possess. Mr. Dalton has at present the assistance of a lay agent and six readers. The stations are *Croghan* and *Boyle*. The latter is the second town of impor-

tance in the county, beautifully situated between Loughs Gana and Key, and within about two miles of the county Sligo. The work, thus propitiously begun, promises to be productive of much good fruit.

We have now gone through all the principal missions of this society at present working, except Dublin, which I have purposely reserved. There could be no difficulty, if space allowed, to append to each of those districts many very interesting particulars illustrative of the movement's progress and success. Two features would, however, be the most prevailing and prominent. They are, the number and stability of *conversions*; and the variety and intensity of *persecutions*. But these both have been seen, and I doubt not sympathised with, in the details of the operations already more minutely dwelt upon. The plan of entering a new locality is materially the same in one place as in another; the manner of obtaining and retaining a position is, likewise, scarcely, if at all, different. This explanation for "hurrying over the stations" will, therefore, be the more acceptable. The insertion here of a minute of the society, bearing the number 942, and just published, will indicate the vast breadth of country over which the society's benefits are at present extended:—

"Upon considering the missions now directed to be commenced, in connexion with those now in operation, and those for which arrangements are in progress, the committee instructed the honoray secretary for missions, to locate the different agents in such a manner, as that a chain of missionary operations may be carried on, combining the influence of each mission with those nearest to it, and therefore with the whole. By this means a circle of missions will be formed around the centre of Ireland, connecting the Galway mission with the Dublin mission by one semicircle, reaching to Lough Erne on the north, and by another extending to Cashel on the south. The northern semicircle will proceed from the West Galway mission by the Lough Mask mission, Bala mission, Roscommon mission, Sligo mission, Lough Erne mission, Louth mission, and Meath mission, to Dublin, with the Achill mission as an outpost on the north-west. The southern semicircle will proceed from the Dublin mission by the south-eastern, the Kilkenny, the Cashel, the Lough Derg, the Loughrea missions, reaching to the Galway mission, with the Shannon mission as an outpost on the south-west."

Perhaps the most important of all those missions is the only one not yet described. In none of the other missions is so distinctly manifested the direct applicability of this society's system to the working out of Ireland's evangelisation. It is therefore that I have kept until now, and apart from the others, a sketch of the

DUBLIN MISSION. The beautiful metropolis of Ireland has been long considered as thoroughly Roman Catholic. Indeed, the National Church in Dublin, though at all times possessing extensive, did not until lately use any, means to promulgate its sacred principles ; while the alien Church of Rome, although not similarly endowed, made unceasing and wonderfully successful strides to render its influence wide-spread and enduring. What causes I have stated as contributing to the decay of true Christianity in the provinces, strictly apply to the increase of its opposite in the chief city—*here, as there, the ministry was to blame.* At present Dublin boasts of having twenty parish churches, and nineteen chapels, where the Gospel *is* preached. The number of "religious houses," wherein the Gospel is practically denied, far exceeds these. Wealth, morality, intelligence, and an elevation of social position, pointedly distinguish those who profess the doctrines of the Bible. Majority in numbers, squalidness, and depravity are the prevailing characteristics of those who hold the opposite. To be sure, a very large number of the Roman Catholic population of Dublin merits the appellation of being highly respectable ; but no one can deny that the vast majority of the 200,000 beings who belong to the "papal persuasion" in Dublin are properly described above. Gradually gaining strength in her dominion over these 200,000 souls, Rome has now exercising her authority amongst them the strength and cunning of the inmates of three monasteries, eight convents, and nine other clerical orders, besides a very large number of parochial priests. In every parish, societies of zealous "confraternity men" aid very materially the general machinery. They principally act as watches, to give alarm if a member is found honestly canvassing the doctrines of his Church ; and as seekers, to tell of some starving Pro-

testant likely to become a passive victim to the seductions of the monks or nuns whom they soon send upon him. Dublin, before missionary operations were opened in it, was thus a very model of a Romish preserve. Few expected to break in upon the nice and crafty arrangements without instant failure. Priestly influence seemed as though it could not be reduced ; and almost no attempt was made to wrest the city from so ruinous a sway. Rome, therefore, very properly claimed Dublin as hers.

The only few efforts made to stir up the drowsiness which had seized the professors of pure Christianity were blessed : Roe came from his retirement in the country, and occasionally succeeded in procuring the opening, for Sunday evening services, of some scarcely-used parish church. Hundreds crowded to hear his proclaiming the message, who otherwise would have been present at some profane amusement ! When duty bade the good minister away, the citizens of Dublin had no one to supply his place except Methodist preachers, to hear whom many objected. Mathias at another time faithfully and ceaselessly declared the Gospel from the Bethesda pulpit, and his church was unable to contain all that were desirous to hear him. These facts show how exceedingly much the ministry was to blame. Christianity was in a deep slumber in Dublin, and while so was nigh being annihilated by her most wary foe. The few good soldiers of the Lord who, by times, like those named, did keep steadfast watch, were used by Him, whose will nothing withstands, to avert the greatest of the danger. Out of the barren prospect, however, God purposed to produce much fruit in His own wise time.

Until the year 1848, when Dublin was the scene of furious agitation, no decided change in the manner of doing duty adopted by the resident ministry took place. Up to that time Rome had almost uninterrupted and free scope. Then the Rev. C. S. Stanford, rector of St. Michan's—a clergyman now well known in the controversial world, and universally esteemed alike for his public character and private virtues, a clergyman in every

respect worthy of the distinguished part it is now evident God destined him to take in the great movement of which I am writing—he commenced, towards the end of 1848, a regular battery, directed against the stronghold of Romanism. This—aided by his excellent curate, the Rev. C. F. MacCarthy—he has kept, without intermission, in active operation to the present day. Controversial lectures were delivered every Tuesday evening, in the commodious school-room attached to his church, either by the rector or his curate. A few Roman Catholics at first attended. But so greatly did the numbers gradually increase, that the church was soon opened, and the lectures delivered from the pulpit.

The manner in which the *Irish Church Missions* came in to sustain the movement so set on foot, is told thus by Mr. Marrable, in his sketch of the society:—

“The late Edward Bickersteth and Mr. Dallas, who came as a deputation from the committee of ‘The Special Fund,’ to the clerical meetings, in April, 1849, held a meeting of the Dublin clergy in Trinity College; it was then resolved to form a ‘Committee of Correspondence,’ for the carrying on and conducting the controversy in that city, and various preachers enlisted themselves as willing to co-operate in this mission. The Rev. C. F. MacCarthy (curate of St. Michan’s) was afterwards appointed to superintend some readers, who were then, for the first time, engaged to go, two-and-two, through the streets, lanes, and alleys, inviting Romanists to attend the sermons, &c., conversing with them freely on the subject of religion, distributing amongst them handbills and tracts, and pressing on the people the importance of abandoning a system which leads men to perdition, instead of salvation through Christ.”

Less wise than they now appear to be, the Dublin priests, whose system was thus piously but determinedly assailed, came forth to offer a defence. Father O’Connell, of Waterford, announced himself in 1849 as an appointed champion to “make nothing of Protestant sophistries.” Dr. Meyler—lately a candidate for the office which Dr. Cullen was more fortunate to secure—became a “special pleader” for Rome against Protestantism. He promised often to prove the necessity and propitiatory qualities of the mass, but never did. In his chapel, however, an excommunication took place; it was

the first which greeted the new movement in Dublin. The victim was a poor man distributing handbills outside the chapel door. "Bell, book, and candle-light" were employed to make effective this curious method of replying to the statements contained in the handbills. Rome seldom gains by her anger. In that instance she prepared against herself a weapon, deadly and sharp, which has ever since been wielded with an effect grievous to her—I mean the letters of "A True Catholic," which, originating in this occurrence, since then have appeared every week in the *Warder*. The style of these letters is masterly. Attacking Rome in doctrine and practice, the writer attracts the mind of the most prejudiced reader, and leads him down without fail to the very end of the chapter. I speak from experience when I say that Rome has not a more formidable and successful enemy than the writer of these letters. No argument was brought more home to my own mind than the simple and conclusive one I accidentally read in some of those letters. So terrible a havoc did they make in Rome's ranks here, that Dr. O'Connell brought them on the altar, to expose what he called calumnies. I often heard priests—most of whom in Dublin read them—lament the pertinacity with which "True Catholic" continues to denude their system. He now takes up every event as it presents itself, and deals with it in the most telling manner. Than these letters, Mr. Stanford's "Hand-book," Michan's class-meeting, and controversial sermons, the priests have no greater objects of intense hatred—and with much reason.

Perhaps the best testimony to the success of the distribution of handbills containing really "vital questions," will be found in the subjoined letter:—

"To the Editor of the 'Warder.'"

"Friday, 3rd August, 1849.

"SIR,—Hoping that you will be so kind as to insert this letter in your paper, I have been induced to write a statement of what took place between me and the Rev. Father Sheppard, in St. Audoen's new chapel, on Wednesday morning, 1st August. Having read some quotations from the Douay Bible on some placards

and handbills announcing controversial sermons in Michan's Church, I went, I confess at first from motives of curiosity to hear how Roman Catholic doctrine could be put down by Roman Catholic Bible quotations. I was thunderstruck at what I heard from time to time; but at last the doctrine of *Intention* made me decide on getting some explanation from my old father confessor, to enable me to make some defence against some Protestant young men of my acquaintance. Accordingly, I went on Wednesday morning to confession to Father Sheppard; and to make my statement more clear, I shall give the exact questions and answers that took place between the priest and myself.

"After going into the box, and begging the priest's blessing, I began with saying :—

"*Penitent.*—'Dear reverend father, it is now three months since I went to confession before, and during that time I was led, by reading verses from our Bible on Protestant placards and handbills, to go and hear sermons in Michan's Church, which have left my mind in a very tortured state.'

"*Priest.*—'It was the devil that made you go, sir, and not the verses. What business had you going at all? Can't you stay in your own church?'

"*Penitent.*—'But, sir, I have got a handbill for this week, and just say whether the statements on it are true or not, and quiet my doubts at once.'

"*Priest.*—'I would not make that much of you as to notice your doubts, or read that lying scrap of paper. How bad you want controversy.'

"*Penitent.*—'But, reverend sir, consider the tortured state of my mind; and this is a very bad way to satisfy my doubts as to the true way to worship God, towards the salvation of my soul.'

"*Priest.*—'Oh, dear me! how I feel for you—how I pity you!—what a way you are in!—how badly you are off for controversy!'

("N.B.—These last words were spoken with an execrable sneer, and contemptuous mockery of my uneasiness and doubts.")

"*Penitent.*—'But, dear reverend sir, is this a way for the priest of God to treat a poor sinner when he comes to get peace with that God, and to get any doubts removed which may have arisen in his mind through the reading of the Roman Catholic Bible quotations, and on account of which there are numbers doubting as well as me?'

"*Priest* (In a thundering voice, loud enough to be heard outside the box, and on account of which I was ashamed to come out, and walk through the chapel).—'Begone, sir, I care not how many are doubting. I shall enter into no discussion with any one;

so go about your business.' (And he banged the slide door so violently as to nearly take the top of my nose off.)

"Does Father Sheppard think it was to a dog he was speaking? The resolution with which I shall prove the truth of the statement made above, should I be called on to do so, will show Father Sheppard how far he is mistaken, in spite of the vengeance and insult that such men as Father Sheppard can hurl at me.

"I remain,

"THE SUFFERING INQUIRER."

This priest has since been called before his Judge while saying mass, and without a moment's warning! The year 1849 witnessed the gathering of many a satisfied searcher into the truth as it is in Jesus. The priests mourned over the increase to God's fold, but, unless by underhand persecutions, they made no sensible effort to stay the glorious work.

In 1850, all the priests were invited, by a printed challenge, sent to each, to come and meet the Rev. Messrs. Nangle, Griffin, Magee, and Fleury, in the Rotundo, and satisfactorily prove that the Creed of Pius IV. was ever received as a creed before the 9th December, 1564. The challenge contained a clever refutation of that novel creed, but was never replied to in any shape or after any manner, although it was repeated last year.

One of the most effective instruments in the general movement is, undoubtedly, *St. Michan's Conversational Controversial Class-Meeting*. More injury to Rome, and good to the Lord's service, has been done in this class-meeting than can be calculated: the ascertained value of its operations is wonderful. About two years ago, and when the lectures were adjourned to the church, Mr. MacCarthy opened St. Michan's class-meeting for all inquirers. At first very few gathered together to learn how God had really planned man's salvation. I recollect, about a year and a-half ago, first visiting "The Class," and finding only sixteen persons present. By degrees its frequenters increased, until, at last, the meeting was found too large for the room in which it first met, and removed to another, in every way better adapted for that use. The new room, which is capable of con-

taining 800 persons, is now too small for the purposes of the meeting, and better than 200 people go away each night without gaining admittance. This is the briefest and most pointed manner of illustrating the progress of the class. The manner of conducting it is quite unique, and so difficult that few beside its founder could for one month creditably, if at all, maintain the position of superintendent.

The Rev. C. F. MacCarthy, as is his custom, on entering the chair, explains, for the benefit of strangers, the object of the meeting, which he then opens with prayer. Some pre-appointed texts of Scripture are next read, and catechetically commented on, to the edification of all present, whether high or low. From the consideration of these parts of Scripture—which are also, when the point so served, made to answer a controversial purpose—the superintendent leads to the subject of the evening—some controverted dogma of the Church of Rome.

While the class might be said to be intended for the general promulgation of true Christianity, it is especially designed to expose the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Every fallacy of that system is taken up on the merits of its own arguments, and, for the most part, refuted by its own weapons. There cannot be conceived a more extensive and more inviting field for inquiry than it affords; and I am delighted to be able to add, that it is very well appreciated both by Romanists and Protestants. Many of the former acknowledge how much they owe to the instruction thus given; and many of the latter, by renouncing Rome, prove the impressive and conclusive manner in which that system is exposed. So terrible an antagonist as this class could not escape the enmity of the priests. They denounced it emphatically, but never ventured within its threshold to encounter the repeated challenges given to them from the rostrum of that meeting. Their emissaries occasionally presented themselves in order to create disturbances, but were invariably detected in the outset of their “labour,” and silenced. It is very remarkable that no annoyance has ever been given to those attending this meeting; no

disturbance has ever taken place within it. When it is remembered what mad enmity was heretofore usually displayed against "busy parsons," Bible-readers, and handbills, we must view this singular change as a great evidence of the advance of the Reformation movement.

I may here also record a recent and most satisfactory testimony to the changed feelings of the once terribly deluded Roman Catholics towards Reformers or Reformation. Perhaps no circumstances besides those consequent on the angry religious contest of a general election, such as we have lately had, could more amply develop this happy change. Few who have read the rancorous speeches, or noted the unscrupulously determined efforts of the Romish leaders, both cleric and lay, to stir up party animosity, and to inflame every mind they could, against Protestantism and Protestants, will not be prepared to find an enormous show of sincere resistance against the Reformation movement, on the part of the people so excited. It will be thought an inevitable consequence of the frightful scenes enacted since the elections began; the more so, as those scenes were obviously the produce of studied and purposed incitements. In truth, from all that has been said and done by the sham champions of "civil and religious liberty," it would be marvellous if anything else had resulted than decided damage to missionary exertions. Be the glory ever to God. I have to proclaim the joyous truth—the more marvellous the more glorious—that all calculations on this head have been wonderfully disappointed.

Dublin continued in a most stormy agitation during the election mania. This city is the head-quarters of papal power. In it sits daily the "Defence" clique, specially formed against proselytism. From its quays are always poured out, in any emergency, the most ruffianly and dirty dastards, to do the tyrannic bidding of the priestly conclave. Its parishes are crammed with zealous "confraternity men," who glory in the death and destruction of heretics. Every means necessary to excite the moderation of this party—to intimidate and compel the timid of that, or to dismay and maltreat the

objectionable of all, was here within reach. The power was not left unemployed. But it is most pleasing and singular that, no matter how furiously the zealots raged against the proselytisers, no steps were taken by *the people* to render it necessary for this society to suspend operations. Dublin, for all the reasons assigned, must afford the best specimen of the state of feeling now existing. Lay agents, Scripture-readers, and every other *employé* of the *Irish Church Missions* in the Reformation cause, went out through this city—apparently so papalised—and were as well received during the election time as ever, and in no case molested. I am aware of an attempt made by a Roman Catholic barrister to excite a large crowd against a lay agent, around whom they had been collected, in the very vicinity of Vincent de Paul's palace at Phibsborough. The people said they heard nothing offensive; and were not now, as of yore, willing to rush to the attack without cause. The barrister was vexed, and began to argue with the agent, whom he took to be some silly son of mammon. To his astonishment and chagrin, he elicited several hard truths, which he would much prefer the people had not heard. The lawyer left, to all appearance in better humour than when he came. So the Lord works, by the very foes of his cause, for its advancement. This is only an instance within my own knowledge; many others as agreeable exist. But more. St. Michan's controversial class, which meets in a poor and papal district, was held, and attended as if nothing extraordinary was going on. The controversial sermons were preached in that church, and in no way disturbed. Placards calling in question Rome's doctrines were read, and suffered to remain unsoiled and untorn. The entire missionary machinery worked during that busling period with its usual calmness and effect. It is a very remarkable fact that while the windows of several churches, including some accused of harbouring Tractarianism, were smashed and otherwise injured—Michan's, that church which persons thought the most obnoxious of all others, was not in any way harmed. I

have reason to know that the priests were very confident of the demolition of St. Michan's Church ; but they reckoned wrongly on the feelings of the people. It was the only church that thoroughly escaped ! Several Roman Catholics were quietly present at a controversial sermon preached in it one evening, when the windows of a church not far off, where no controversy *insults* Romanists, were broken. The preacher on that occasion was a little timid, because he had been attacked the night before, lest he may be then set upon especially. But he passed through the streets without any evidence even of disrespect. I recollect hearing of a man, who, because he declined to vote for the papal candidate for the city, was accused of attending St. Michan's controversial class, and there imbibing the principles of that "deludering parson, MacCarthy." Yet Mr. MacCarthy and his class were respected. So was the truly good and worthily-famed author of the *Handbook*. So was the Reformation cause altogether. These facts contain a lesson which may benefit the indifferent, if they only can apply it to themselves. Would that we had many honest, determined, outspoken, Christian men, like the rector and curate of St. Michan's. We would then have less disrespect shown by Roman Catholics to parsons or churches.

During the last winter and spring almost every evening in the week was taken up in public controversy. On Sunday evenings sermons were delivered in St. Michan's and in St. Thomas's. On Monday evenings lectures were given in the school-rooms of St. Nicholas and St. James. On Tuesday evenings St. Michan's controversial class met, and Trinity Church pulpit was occupied by its minister in exposing Romanism. On Wednesday evenings sermons were preached in St. Nicholas's and in the Episcopal Church, and discussions took place in St. James's school-room. On Thursday evenings lectures were given in St. Michan's Church. On Friday evenings the agents met for prayer ; and on Saturdays they assembled to relate the week's proceedings, and receive counsel and instruction for the ensuing week.

In summer many of the lectures were, of necessity, discontinued, but will, as usual, be resumed at the suitable period. Roman Catholics crowded to these discourses, especially to Michan's and to all the class meetings, which continue at work the year round. The most popular and constant preachers, and whose discourses and other unceasing efforts have been greatly blessed, are the Rev. Messrs. Griffin, M'Ghee, Fleury, MacCarthy, Ellis, Dowling, Halahan, Crampton, and Gregg. Many others, too, have very often borne a generous helping hand; but those named have been successfully, and without cessation, labouring in the missionary cause. One other name has to be mentioned, and that is—C. S. Stanford. He has lately confined his discourses upon these subjects to his term of preaching in Christ's Church Cathedral, therefore I have not placed his name with the above; but his church is open all the year round for the purpose of controversy, and he is ever present to encourage and give countenance to the efforts. His voice is ever to be heard at the missionary council-table. His name and aid are invariably associated with every exertion in a cause which, when it wanted an advocate, found him. The product of his talent and time has long since been held as a great boon in the controversial field—his *Handbook to the Romish Controversy*. This valuable controversialist's companion and inquirer's guide, Mr. Stanford has given to the world at a price by which his pecuniary loss has been considerable.—But then his real object has been gained, and truth has been placed within the reach of the poorest Roman Catholic. So startling were the first effects of this *Handbook*, that Dr. O'Connell was called from his retirement, to give a series of lectures "refuting" the refutation of Pope Pius's Creed. As a specimen of the result of these sermons, I copy the following paragraph from the *Warder* of January the 7th, 1852:—

"On Sunday a gentleman of respectability, who holds a Government situation, together with his wife, renounced Romanism, and conformed to the pure Scriptural doctrines of Irish Catholicity. These conversions, they desire us to state, are attri-

butable, through the Spirit of God, to a careful perusal of our own incomparable Mr. Stanford's admirable *Handbook*, and an unprejudiced contrast of its contents with the attempted refutation by Dr. O'Connell, all of whose sermons on its subjects they regularly attended, as well as some of those in answer to them which were delivered from St. Michan's pulpit."

In the same paper appeared this allusion to Dr. O'Connell's Sermons :—

"The readers of the *Warder* are not quite unacquainted with the capabilities of Dr. O'Connell, and, therefore, they can form a pretty fair conjecture as to the substance of his opening discourse. Instead of being an exposition of the *Handbook*, it was a tirade of abuse, in the Doctor's best style, on the *Handbook's* author. We think it due to his Doctorship, as well as to Mr. Stanford, to give a few of those epithets with which his reverence so much contributed to the delight of an 'angered audience.' In his estimation—and his words met response in the tatter-clad women who filled the aisle—Mr. Stanford was 'a liar,' 'a backbiter,' 'an ignoramus,' 'a popinjay,' and every other 'jay,' that the Doctor could think of. No single proof was brought forward to warrant a most trifling doubt as to the accuracy of Mr. Stanford's argument on that non-existent 'Tradition,' and it was on this subject the 'Doctor' said anything in the way of argument. It was a scolding sermon, not an argumentative one.

One great charm in the movement going on within our city is, the peculiar method which the priests have recently adopted to neutralise its workings—viz., silence on the points of difference between Christianity and Romanism, and a strict adherence to the underhand cursing system. To frighten the people is the only resource left, because open discussion is found to be open exposure. I know that many men in independent circumstances, who figured as zealous devotees, either at the Jesuits' chapel, or his pretended Grace's *sanctum* in Marlborough-street, about twelve months ago, are now faithful Protestants, becoming such from having first asked themselves, "Why are our priests silent, when such important statements respecting religion are put out on placards?" And thus on, through "whys" and "wherefores," to the vital questions, "Is there some essential want in our Church?"—have many "come out;" and by the same

process are many still coming out. Thus much have the controversial placards done to start the doubts, and so much have the sermons done to set them properly on the chase. And though this fact is undeniable, we have some clerical folk, even of our Church (professionally), who question it. To the callous and uninviting stand taken by such men belonging to our Church as these, is chiefly attributable the timidity observable in a Roman Catholic who has abandoned Rome. He loves Protestantism, but somehow fears Protestants. Not content with doubting the progress of a work they ought not, as Protestants, seek to retard, these men endeavour to cast a slur on the capabilities of its promoters, and upon the plan of its operations. The success attending the workers and the system is ample reply to all their ungenerous and envious objections.

I will here, *en passant*, observe, that the effect of the *Irish Church Missions'* system has been not merely evidenced by many converts, but also by the change which is discernible in those who nominally profess the system exposed: "Priests and People," once "a toast," pointing to a unity that was considered indissoluble, is now no longer of that inseparable nature which it seems they were. These names are not identified one with the other so very superstitiously as I knew them to have been. The priests call and implore the people to come to mass and confession; but, though the people hear, they reply not, and do not go. They tremble at the consequences of the priest's wrath, but consider themselves safe enough so long as they are outwardly "within the pale." I speak of *men*, for unfortunately the priests have not lost their sway over the effeminate portion of the Irish race. They can, doubtless, have some success where reason is pliable—where there is naturally no manliness. But they have signally failed in gaining to the debasing subjection which characterised the people of past years, men—men who are not in feeling womanish. I shall advance proof for this assertion: not a chapel in Dublin can boast of its mass-frequenters of the male sex being one-third of what it used to

be. But people may go to mass for curiosity or other such motives. Not so to confession. There, however—and it is the grand test—the priests of Dublin have lost almost all. Look into a chapel, any hour, of a confession day, and see for yourself. All are found to be women—some prostrate before the confessional, or timidly waiting for their “turn,” with sayings ready for utterance that they would blush to tell their mothers—others coming out of the box with the disgusting questions of the priests yet dinning in their ears, and seeking to veil the scarlet which momentarily suffuses their cheeks; but there they are—all women. You may see an occasional man; yes, a man to all appearance. Inquire what sort of a man he is, and you are sure to be informed that he seldom leaves his wife’s “apron-strings,” or that he is newly married to a young handsome bride, or is something which does not exactly indicate then a manly mind. But at all events, there is a glorious absence of manliness manifested at all the confessionals of the city. The priests and the women have it now to themselves; and, I presume, the women and the priests do not form “the people.” But this general testimony is from my own experience. I shall not, however, be accused of wanting proper respect for a valuable supporter of this evidence. No one will question the opinion on this subject of Dr. Yore, Vicar-General of the Pope in Dublin. Then it exactly coincides with what I have said, only that the doctor does not say whether men or women are the absentees. He made use of the following expression not many Sundays ago, in his own chapel:—

“There are *so few* coming to their *duty*, that I am afraid every spark of Christianity is quite extinct in the breasts of those who had been faithful. The time is fast going by, and if you do not now come on, this Easter, too, will pass over the heads of thousands, leaving you as it found you.”

The instant a Roman Catholic doubts, or loses confidence in his Church, he abandons the confessional; and if he attends mass, it is for form’s sake. This is the first step on quitting Rome, and, believing as I do, that the Romish system of religion is not the Christian sys-

tem of religion, I hail with delight every symptom of a sinner's casting it off. Our triumph, then, is not that the majority of the Dublin Roman Catholic men have become irreligious, in the *true sense*, but that they have seen, and heard, and felt so much in reference to their Church as obliges them not to rely upon its authority or soul-saving powers, and that they must gradually and silently, but necessarily, fly from "the unclean thing." This is a triumph I can happily announce, and one in which every well-wisher of Roman Catholics and of Ireland will fully participate.

So steadily has the good work progressed, and still is progressing, that nearly every month requires an increase to the missionary agencies. Although they are now of considerable strength, they are not equal to the daily enlarging of the operations. The Rev. C. F. MacCarthy—perhaps one of the most practical controversialists of the day, and, for many other reasons besides, especially well adapted to the office—superintends the Dublin, or chief mission. He is assisted by two other clergymen. The missionary staff besides is composed of nine lay agents, fifty-five readers, and four schoolmasters. Every Saturday these meet Mr. MacCarthy at the society's office, where he imparts to them, in his peculiarly impressive style, much practical instruction—profitable alike for their individual interests and the grand object they all have in view. From amongst the agents thus regularly trained in Dublin, the different provincial missions are supplied. All "new men," are sent to Dublin, for the purpose of coming under Mr. MacCarthy's invaluable instruction; and I have seen some who, when they came up, could barely reply to the simplest questions, go back fully able to combat the wildest priest.

Perhaps this system of training is the most important, as it is one of the most useful appendages to the mission machinery. To render it of greater effect, an addition to the society's expenses in Dublin has been made, which will secure an incalculably great advantage to its efficiency. It is also an indication of how bountifully the labours of this invaluable society have been blessed.

The increased expenditure is caused by it being found necessary to establish, on new and excellent principles, a missionary model school in this city—the head-quarters of that society's operations. The necessity was only explained, when the pious ladies of Dublin, by the most praiseworthy and untiring exertions, procured the necessary funds to arrange properly such a building as had been required.

The following statement, which has been issued with regard to the New Mission House, fully explains its purpose :—

“The success which the Almighty has mercifully vouchsafed to the exertions of the Society for Irish Church Missions, has raised a demand for an increased number of readers ; and clergymen in all parts of the country have been requested to send up promising young men on probation to Dublin, to be instructed under Rev. C. F. MacCarthy, who has at work a system of training peculiarly well adapted for this purpose. In carrying these views into effect, it has been deemed to be of the utmost importance to provide a suitable lodging-house for the young men who may be sent up to be trained, that they may be also under the direct superintendence of an experienced man, who can (when under the same roof) see that they attend to regular hours, and employ their time to the utmost advantage. Many most urgent reasons might be named to prove the necessity of strict superintendence, but those acquainted with Dublin will easily imagine them ; and in addition to the general evils of a town, there are many snares laid purposely to entrap the readers, by those who would rejoice in their downfall.”

Several pious and influential ladies in Dublin have formed themselves into a most useful auxiliary to the *Irish Church Missions Society*. By their exertions all the extensive operations in Dublin are very materially aided.

I have now, as far as I was enabled, sketched the wonderful work so successfully carried on by this noble society. It only remains for me to sum up its general agency, in order to give a more thorough indication of its present position and prospects :—

Including the Achill mission, which increases the agency by 41 individuals—viz., 4 clergymen, 6 Scripture-

readers, 22 schoolmasters, and 9 schoolmistresses, the number of labourers directly employed by the *Irish Church Missions Society* will be found as—316. This number is thus divided:—Ordained missionaries, 32; lay agents, 19; readers, 163; schoolmasters, 60; and schoolmistresses 32. The number of principal missions now appointed, and in which these Gospel labourers toil, is 23. These are situated so as to easily communicate with 74 minor stations. At present 69 schools are directed by teachers of the society. Many of those schools are licensed places of worship. Parish churches are being daily enlarged, to accommodate the increasing congregations; while new churches are being erected in the wildest and hitherto most inaccessible parts of the country. The districts thus favoured bear, physically, socially, and morally, every mark of the religious change they are undergoing, or have undergone.

Another feature in the organisation, and one which points to a very considerable, though comparatively inexpensive, enlargement of the agency, is the establishment of "local committees for missions." This wise combination amongst the clergy has been productive of important results. The local committees, so called into existence, consult for the interests of the mission in their respective districts, and are aided by the parent society with readers, or any other species of co-operation requisite. There are at present over thirty such committees in different portions of the country. Besides these, friendly-disposed clergymen, in over four hundred parts of Ireland, seek similar opportunities of extending God's Word to their Roman Catholic countrymen. The local committees occasionally, as progress advises, become direct missions—so the work advances.

The important task I laid out to myself, of sketching the Reformation Movement from the earliest period, is now performed. I am myself well aware of the imperfections that can be shown in this necessarily cursory and too oft digressive narrative; but I believe, however otherwise unequal to the great and serious undertaking, I have guarded against impartiality and injustice. The

details given are provable, and I hope not uninteresting. Facts have been carefully selected from probabilities; and the religious, social, and moral condition of the people, under varied circumstances, has been allowed to develop itself. Some few observations appertaining to the general effect of the movement, and other circumstances arising from it, now only remain to be made in

CONCLUSION.

TESTIMONY TO THE REALITY OF THE WORK will certainly be least objectionable, when given solely upon the authority of those whose interest it is to deny it if they at all can. I shall, therefore, permit the foes of Reformation to portray in their own peculiar fashion, and with much awkward reluctance, its progress. The *Nation* newspaper, universally admitted to be the most zealous advocate of what Roman Catholics deemed to be their right, wailing over the havoc, illustrates the process of heaven's vengeance upon the apostasy, thus:—

“The Irish nation is fast dissolving, as the Jewish nation dissolved before the curse of God—as the Carthaginian nation dissolved before the sword of Rome—as the Red Indian race silently dissolves before the face of the White Man. *Ireland is ceasing to be a Roman Catholic nation.*”

The same organ of the Romish republican party adds:—

“In many parishes at present the priest gazes on his empty chapel, and thinks of the tempting offer of a pension from the Crown—a graver peril to religion than a thousand ecclesiastical titles' bills. With the remnant of the Catholic priesthood of Ireland lost in the *purlieus* of the Atlantic cities, with the youth of Connaught reared up to hate the faith of their race and nation, with the priests fed upon English bounty, the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland will need a Defence Association of guardian angels to save it from extinction.”

Apropos of the final sentence in the above, I shall

here insert a significant passage from a speech delivered by Father Mullen, at a banquet given to him before his departure for America, where he found greater danger still existing towards his Church. In these few words he describes the religion he professes, and admits its extinction :—

“ Soon, soon the day will come when the saints will look down from heaven, and see *their own land* a wilderness—none to speak their praises, or revere their temples, old or new.”

“ Soon, soon ” not a saint-worshipper will Ireland be guilty of possessing ; all her devotion will henceforward be given unto Him from whom it was so long withheld. Then will she have a “ defence association ” of angels, who need not dread that the glory of their King will be divided amongst them. Then will Ireland bid fair to be as of yore, the home of prosperity, and the “ island of saints ; ” not as now, the land of paupers, saint-worship-pers, and religion-mongers.

The notorious Father Fitzgerald, while lamenting this great fact, inadvertantly admits, in the following sentence, that the priests are not regarded with the religious respect of old :—

“ These evils are not irremediable, if *the priests were, as of old, the tribunes of the people, to enlighten, to cheer, to lead them to peaceful triumph over their oppressors and destroyers. But as it is, our nation and our Church are perishing.*”

The favourite organ of the late Dr. Murray (Roman Catholic Archbishop), the *Dublin Evening Post* of Nov. 11th, 1851, records the triumph of the movement in these terms :—

“ We learn from unquestionable (Roman) Catholic authority, that the success of the proselytisers in almost every part of the country, and, we are told, in the metropolis, is beyond all that the worst misgivings could have dreamt of.”

The *Times*, too, for a long time sceptical as to this important point, makes the following statement :—

“ It seems now pretty clear that something like a Reformation is taking place in the province of Connaught. . . . The Irish mind is, at this moment, undergoing a change of incalculable importance.”

Dr. Cullen's pet paper, the *Tablet*, regretting the glorious advance of truth, exclaims:—

“We repeat, that it is not Tuam, nor Cashel, nor Armagh, that are the chief seats of successful proselytism, but this very city in which we live.”

With great satisfaction I also transfer the annexed passage from Dr. Wilde's *Irish Popular Superstitions*, lately published. It suits this point admirably:—

“One of our most learned and observant Roman Catholic friends has just written to us, in answer to some queries relative to superstitions—‘The tone of society in Ireland is becoming more and more ‘Protestant’ every year; the literature is a Protestant one, and even the priests are becoming more Protestant in their conversation and manners. They have condemned all the holy wells and resorts of pilgrims, with the single exception of Lough Derg, and of this they are ashamed: for, whenever a Protestant goes upon the island, the ceremonies are stopped! Among all the affectionate mentions of his dearly-beloved father made by John O'Connell, he had not the courage to say ‘*the Lord rest his soule.*’ I have watched these changes with great interest.’”

These evidences could without difficulty be multiplied. One great and universal refuge from this danger, pointed at by the priests, was emigration. Far away from the particular enemy to Rome that Ireland now possesses, it was thought that the peasant would have had nothing to induce him to abandon error. No kind friend in foreign lands was expected to give him a Bible, and then he was quite safe. But, alas for human speculation, the priests have discovered that no land where freedom lives can countenance Rome as Rome could desire. America, the greatest hope of the affrighted sons of “Mother Church,” so honestly shields the right of a free conscience, that, upon the authority of Father Mullen, already named, *two millions* of people have been lost to Romanism within the United States. He further declares, that bad as it is for “the Church” at home, it is far worse when the people flock to America; they there forget their priests *altogether*, and go without hesitation to heretical meeting-houses. Thus the move-

ment so felt in Ireland stretches its wholesome strength into the bosom of a vast country beyond the huge Atlantic.

THE CHARGE OF BRIBERY, as a means to effect this great and godly work, is in itself so absurd as scarcely to need refutation. But because of the audacity and reckless perseverance with which it has been urged, a few words about it may not be ill-placed. Fragile, indeed, would be the work linked together by such a miserable chain as that corruptible one, which those who ever find it a ready tie for themselves, would make the world believe unites the Irish converts to Christianity. Dishonesty, not poverty, scars the life of man. Can it be credited, that tens of thousands, without getting rid of the latter, would soil their good name with the former? No, the converts of Ireland are linked to Christ by a chain more durable than adamant—more strong than death. This has been proven by experience—this will be further seen by time. If sincerity were not at the bottom of the act, why would a man accept the most revolting persecution instead of peace? If noble motives did not prompt him on, if his establishment in Christianity had not been complete, how can we account for the man who had fawned at a fellow-creature's feet, deeming him a demigod, now casting off his chains, and looking with manly independence to heaven alone. His character has become regenerate—his new life extertive and uncontaminated. Having, according to the logic advanced, similar opportunities in this point before, why not show similar results? By the fruit the tree is known. Pure Christianity is the wand which has exorcised the evil, and planted the good. Pure Christianity is the *bribe* which has been eagerly grasped at by tens of thousands of Irishmen. Pure Christianity is the wreath which entwines the convert's brow with happiness, and enables him to smile at the sensualist's base calumny. With Romanism the prevailing scene is glitter and gold—to this earthly dross does it naturally assign every result. Its eyes are as earth—earthy. With *pure* Christianity, whether in a Connemara hut or in a Windsor Castle, there is an immortal, constant, burning sunshine. Its rays

impart an unspeakable bliss. It is diametrically opposed to Romanism. I have taken the priestly accusation as an insult to my fellow-countrymen, as a calumny on the Christian religion, and as such I repel it. No proof in its support has ever been attempted, although they have far and away paraded the falsehood with daring effrontery; but men are not always blind under Romish influence, and the depth of this miserable calumny will, by the God of the Reformation, be made manifest even to them.

In order to give a great substance to this monstrous charge, a priestly "Defence Association" was established, whose fundamental object is avowedly the suppression of a proselytism which it asserts is thus carried on. To prove that assertion—at one of its public meetings—the head of the Romish Church here, urged the positive necessity there existed of procuring, not only simple testimony, but appalling proof of the supposed wretched system of proselytism by bribery. That this purpose may be effected with unerring accuracy, the secretary carried on, as directed, from that day forth, a regular correspondence with the priests and other influentials in the districts of Ireland where God's Gospel more especially prevailed. The meeting was held to receive this testimony, and many, like myself, went thither to be enlightened on a charge which, if proved, would not be more emphatically censured by the emancipated Paul Cullen, than by all Protestants. But what has the band of "deliverers" gleaned throughout Ireland to substantiate the abhorred idea—what testimony that the heart-breaking misery of our unfortunate country was made available for a satanic snare? The meeting had been held, but the expected proof, alas for human hopes, was a dead, dismal, hideous blank—an imminent failure. The character of our glorious Christian cause was brightened by the base attempt to blacken it.

It is well that at length the unscrupulous and lawless gang of Defenders have had their fabrications blown into thin air, and by themselves. They could not show, though having searched diligently, where, amidst Ireland's calamities, the detestable accusation of proselytism by bribery

existed. Mr. Dallas, too, felt called upon to vindicate the character of the movement, and challenged the secretary of that society to produce one proof, and he would cease to carry on the operations further. The challenge was declined, and the charge has thus been nobly refuted.

THE NUMBER OF CONVERTS is much larger than the figures giving roundly those who have openly "come out" would indicate ; but even only reckoning those who are avowedly converts, 35,000 is far within the number. The largest portion of these will be found in the West, where better than 13,000 have "come to Jesus the one Mediator," from Rome's countless and powerless advocates. I think I am safe in saying that 20,000 converts have been brought to truth through the *Irish Church Missions Society* alone. Figures can only very uncertainly inform of the extension of the Gospel. It spreads so mysteriously rapid and far that His eye which penetrates all time and things can alone judge of its extent or effect. By way of explaining the influence of its operations, I may mention, that in one month over 10,000 Roman Catholics are conversed with on religion by the *Irish Church Missions'* agents in Dublin. Impressions of greater or less importance are made on each of these, and through them are communicated to others. In this manner inquiry is created and fostered. Sometimes the doubts raised by conversation are satisfied by the formal public lectures; and then, if the individual thus unsettled in Rome does not become a Protestant, he cannot be counted a Romanist. He is a Romanist in name, and a convert in all but name. If the persons who are acted upon by feelings of this kind be added to those who have been less timid in becoming avowed converts, the number of the latter, instead of as before given, should be at least trebled.

THE INFLUENCE OF GOSPEL TRUTH is now universally felt in Ireland, and from the nature of things it is difficult to comprehend how Rome can long survive. The priests see that, and though it startles them, they have not so lost self-control as not to assume a quiet they do not really feel. They know that the people of Ireland are being gradually, continually, and gently drawn out

of Romanism, or, which means the same thing, *educated* in Christianity. The general operation is evidently actuated by the Spirit of the Most High. Its signal success could not else be accounted for. Trace it through its numerous features, its separate or combined actions on a being or beings, and the great movement bears in most intelligible characters the "signet" of Divine aid. Look at its results in the individual or locality—either physical, intellectual, moral, or religious—and you at once identify the wondrous change with the workmanship of God. Did we require to illustrate how indispensable to national prosperity—how conducive to the development of man's nobler faculties is the teaching and learning of God's Word—the history of old Ireland when purely Christian, and the changes occurring daily where Christ is at present preached and received, afford abundant proof. I could contrast the North with the South—districts of the South or West, with each other, and see whether the Gospel or its abuse more effectually promoted the interests of man in any specific walk. I could point to Connemara, while the priests held supremacy, and to Connemara initiated in Christianity; and even though the aid of prosperous times was at the back of the former era in that country's history, I would ask, whether now or before it had attained that happiness, that quiet, and that soul-comforting religion, which it seems is a grand yearning of man? Leaving the hitherto barren districts of Ireland in their Gospel-acquired character, I could close the picture with individuals whose wills were as untractable as their natural endowments were great, subdued by the copious and urgent influences of this holy training—I could point out reckless sinners, who, coming to a knowledge of Christ's unadulterated religion, now seek but that path which leads onward to moral perfection and eternal bliss. I could, in short, practically show that the systematic study of this science, if I may so call it, constitutes the only best influence on our social and moral condition. Time will show this desirable change manifested throughout the length and breadth of the land. The

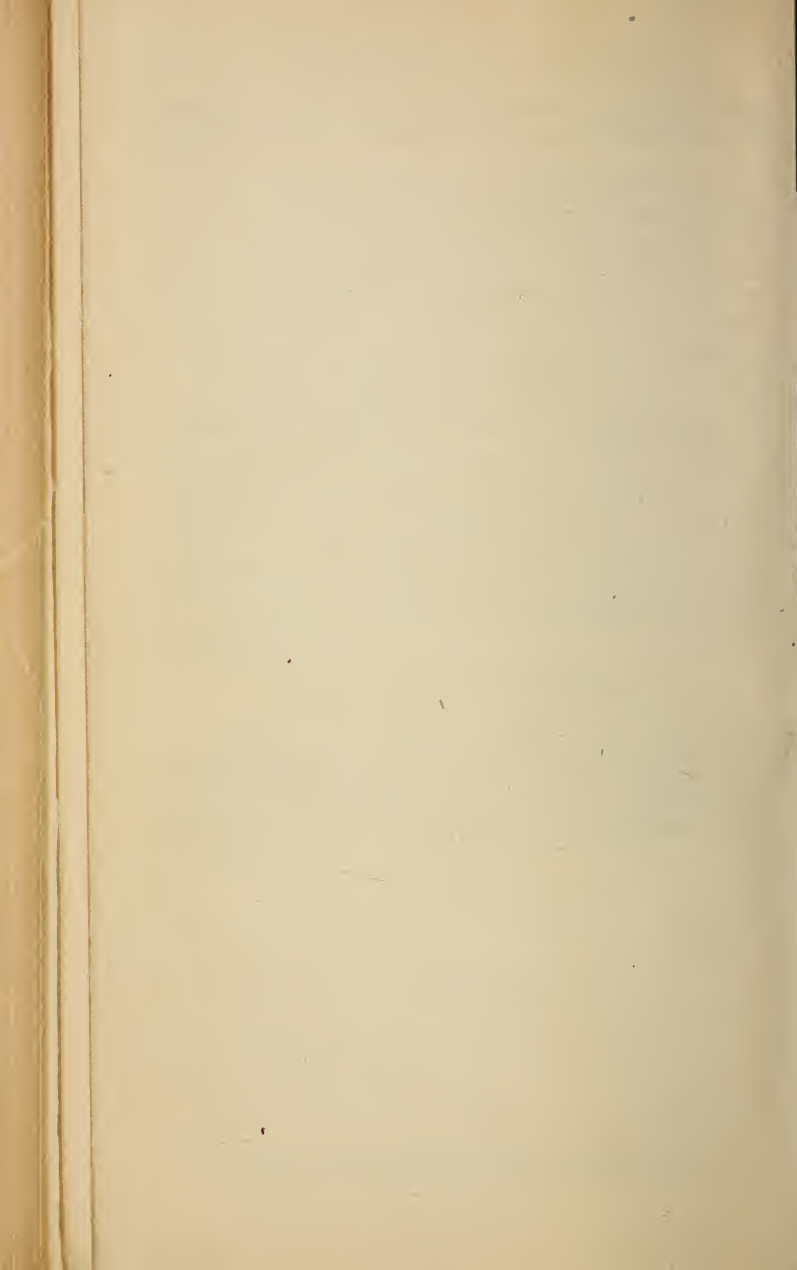
remedy for our long-neglected miseries is at length being skilfully applied. Its effects are already being generally felt.

I have merely to add, that it is my anxious hope, as it is my fervent prayer, that the Romish Church continue to be vigorously but charitably opposed, and that the resources of the soldiers engaged in the warfare be augmented; and I look confidently to the issue. To Rome's presence we impute our unhealthiness—to her absence we look for recovery. Let all who can and are desirous to wrest the tyrannic baton from her grasp and break it to pieces—who wish to hold to Christ and crush His enemies, but support the spread of missionaries, and we trust to the Father of our Lord Jesus to uphold them against the outrages of fanatical rabbles, to whose violence they must necessarily be exposed. From this contest do I hope to see Ireland arise as in her pristine grandeur, and as nearly as possible realising the picture of those who, though they might have loved her, tended her, in ignorance of her disease—in short, I expect to see her become—

“Great, glorious, and free,
First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea.”

“And now,” in the words of the 32nd verse of the 20th chapter of Acts, “I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

THE END.



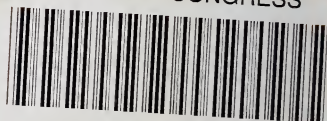
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